

The Indiana Jewish POST & OPINION

Senior Living

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HONEYMOON — Although the Maccabiah was a tragedy for the Australian team, it was a honeymoon for British Maccabiah rugby player Peter Noble and his bride, Caroline, who clearly wanted everybody to know.



TURN TO PAGE 12 — The full explanation for this photo is available in Jean Herschaft's column in this issue describing the spring luncheon of Yeshiva University Women's Organization, YUWO. From left is Dr. Norman Lamm, honorees Diane Wassner and Frances Schub and Dina Pinczower, board chairman.

Dr. Burg recommends 1 or 2-year armistice on religious question

LOS ANGELES — A solution to the problem of the non-Orthodox rabbinical rights in Israel was offered by Dr. Josef Burg, long-serving member of the Knesset, who has called for an armistice for one or two years.

"The discussion between Reform, Conservative and Orthodox is more than 150 years old and cannot be solved in one morning," he told The Los Angeles Jewish Times.

He added that "the fact is that the composition of the Jewish population in the United States and in Israel is different, and we have to take our best minds to find a bridge and not to deepen the gap."

He noted that the real problem was not Reform or Conservative conversions, but how to draw people back to Judaism. "About 10 percent of the Jewish population in Israel comes from the former Soviet Union where they lived under a Stalinist, anti-religious and anti-Zionist rulership for more than 70 years. How do we bring them back to Jewish culture?"

On the problem with the



Dr. Josef Burg

Palestinians, Dr. Burg also had a view. He said Israelis would be allergic to being denied the right to live in the land of their forefathers — but, he conceded, although Greater Israel was a "nice idea," it was "without reality today."

The father of Jewish Agency chairman Abraham Burg, Dr. Burg was one of Israel's longest serving Knesset members and held various portfolios, including Health, Interior and Police, and Religious Affairs.

A rabbi and a philosopher, he immigrated to Palestine from Germany in 1939.

Klan sticking its nose into another situation

ST. LOUIS — A program whereby individuals might adopt a half-mile of a state highway and then are able to place a sign that would indicate such "ownership" has led to a problem as one of the "purchasers" of a stretch of Interstate 55 turned out to be the Ku Klux Klan.

The 1994 plan was that such owners would maintain their section by keeping it clean of debris, planting flowers etc. and some 5,000 groups have participated in the novel idea.

One such group was headed by Michael Cuffley, who turned out to be the state coordinator for the KKK, and when the state went to court to retract the purchase, it found not only the American Civil Liberties Union defending the Klan's rights but the courts deciding for the defendant even though the state had argued that children would be disturbed by the sign, plus the state could lose federal funding.

The state court ruling favoring the position of the klan was

Continued on page NAT 4

When, how to choose nursing home care

Selecting a nursing home for your parents or loved one is never easy. However, it's a decision many people will eventually have to make.

Of all people turning 65 this year, 45 percent will need to stay in a nursing home at some point during their lifetime. And with life-expectancies continually on the rise, almost 9 million people will need to utilize long-term care services by the year 2000.

Once home- and community-based health-care options have been exhausted, or if an individual needs round-the-clock care and supervision, a nursing home may be the best choice.

Stressful feelings, for the family as well as the future resident, often accompany the process of choosing a nursing home. If your loved one is in good mental health, put his or her mind at ease by involving them in all decision-making.

Planning ahead as much as possible assures the best choice for your individual needs. Discuss nursing homes with your loved ones well in advance. This way, you can make informed decisions for loved ones who are no longer mentally alert when the time comes for a nursing home.

There are two primary issues to consider when forming an initial list of prospective nursing homes. First, determine what level of health care is needed. Second, choose a location that will allow close proximity to family, friends and visitors.

Think about what types of community activities and services the resident enjoys, then try to find a nursing home that allows access.

Nursing home information is available to you through a number of reliable sources. Seek as many referrals as you can when beginning your se-

lection process.

Talk to professionals in the long-term care field, social workers, your family physician and religious organizations. Family and friends who have been in similar circumstances are perhaps the most valuable resources and will understand your questions and concerns.

Each agency on aging has an Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman, as required by law. An ombudsman is responsible for visiting nursing homes on a regular basis and investigating all resident complaints.

While an ombudsman cannot recommend one particular nursing home over another, he or she can give you information about any complaints against a facility and tell you the results of any investigations.

The ombudsman can also suggest what signs to look for that indicate good or bad care in a facility. You can reach the ombudsman by calling the Senior Law Project at 631-9424.

The State Department of Health produces an annual report on every Medicare- or Medicaid-certified nursing home. This report is required by federal law to be available at each nursing home; or ask your ombudsman for a copy.

During your nursing home visits, make sure you ask to see the Residents' Bill of Rights. This document details

Continued on page 7

Assisted living aids partially able elders

This spring the Indiana General Assembly approved a bill that in the long run will help Hoosiers with assisted living. House Bill 1630 directs the Health Finance Commission to develop recommendations for licensing procedures, rules and regulations for assisted-living facilities.

Assisted-living facilities provide an alternative for people who need help with certain daily activities, but don't need nursing-home care. They provide a home-like environment with hotel-type services, such as housekeeping, laundry and a dining room.

"Assisted-living facilities start with the premise that a person's privacy, independence, and dignity are honored," said Paul Severance, executive director of United

Senior Action, an advocacy group for seniors.

The emphasis is on functional assistance, rather than medical care, which is an important distinction, according to Severance. "Nursing homes were started to provide medical care. Functional care is helping someone do something they can't do for themselves anymore," he explained.

Even people with severe functional problems can live in assisted-living facilities if they can get help with such daily chores as bathing, dressing and taking medications.

Most experts agree that nursing homes aren't the solution for everyone. But, if you are in a low-income bracket and can no longer stay at home, you will end up in a

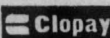
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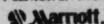
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BOUQUET OF THE WEEK

Memo to: Pandell's Florist, 1601 N. Capitol Ave.
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Marcy Ekhaus

The P-O Bouquet of the Week goes to Marcy Ekhaus, the new director of administration at the Hasten Hebrew Academy of Indianapolis.

Ekhaus began her work as administrator May 1, working with retiring administrator Sylvia Blain. She took sole control of the reins June 30.

Mrs. Ekhaus has a long record of volunteering in the community, having served on the board of the Federation and on its budget and allocations committee. She is a former chapter president of Women's American ORT and a long supporter of the Center. She has served on the



Marcy Ekhaus

Center's youth, camp and strategic planning committees.

She and her husband, Ivan, have three children, former and current students at the Academy.

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Swiss banks' list of accounts a trick says claimants' lawyer

By ED STATTMANN

A group of Swiss banks last week published a list of Nazi-era Swiss bank account holders, but attorneys representing claimants to such accounts are skeptical about the list's completeness.

Richard Shevitz is one of those lawyers. He and Irwin Levin of the Indianapolis firm of Cohen & Malad firm represent some of the clients in a class action lawsuit that seeks up to \$7 billion from Swiss banking institutions that administered accounts that many victims of the Holocaust had hoped would help them or whoever in their family might survive.

"Our clients are not on the list," Shevitz said. "This is one of a series of efforts in which the Swiss banks have announced they have conducted a search and come up with a list of dormant bank accounts. Each time they do this, they claim they've conducted a thorough and exhaustive search. But every time they go back to the well, they find new names."

"I don't view this particular list as any kind of extensive accounting by any means. I wouldn't have expected any particular names. I welcome any of these ongoing efforts by the Swiss banks to continue searching these files for these dormant bank accounts. However, I view these efforts with a great deal of skepticism. ... Basically, you have the fox accounting for the number of eggs missing from the henhouse."

Survivors Mike Vogel of Indianapolis and Margaret Merin, 84, of Fort Wayne, are among the thousands of Jews demanding justice.

Shevitz said he is skeptical also that justice can emerge from the supposed independent audit of a special commission.

"In our view, the only sure-fire method of assessing this is an adversarial one, by someone who has a vested interest. It's simply not good enough to rely on the banks or committees that are put together by the Swiss bankers themselves to conduct an audit," he said.

"It's kind of a smoke screen or diversion. These public relations efforts can be very effective. People are under the misperception that it's over."

"It is our belief, and it is our position, that lots of the dormant bank accounts were closed out by the Swiss during the postwar years — the '50s, in particular," Shevitz said.

He says the validity of the banks' claims that they have now, in 1997, uncovered dormant bank accounts is doubtful, because they should have been searching forward from the 1940s instead of backward from the '90s. By searching backward, he said, they ignore the commingling of accounts that was done in the 1950s and '60s.

Shevitz said he believes the effort to make some kind of initial distribution was meant to persuade the federal court in the class action case that the

lawsuit was unnecessary and that the court lacked jurisdiction.

Shevitz said there are thousands of claimants, only a few

of whom are the named plaintiffs. Most plaintiffs are second-generation, but a few are survivors, like Vogel and

Continued on page 5

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Maurers chair charity ball

Mr. and Mrs. Michael Maurer will be co-chairs of the 11th annual Elizabetha Ball, a benefit for St. Elizabeth's Home, Aug. 22, from 7 p.m. to midnight at the Indiana Roof Ballroom.

The ball is the largest fund raising event for the home, a United Way agency operating under the auspices of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

The home provides services for pregnant women and single mothers, including adoption arrangements, prenatal care, counseling, parenting classes and education, including access to GED classes.

Corporate tables are \$1,500 per table of eight, patrons' tables \$175 each and other individuals' settings \$125. Aug. 8 is the deadline for reservations, available by phoning 787-3412.

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I HEARD IT ON TUESDAY

'Firecracker Girl' gets star-spangled birthday honors

By GISELA WEISZ
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picnickers and also received many birthday cards from far and near. Joe, Mrs. Goldstein's husband, talks about his beloved wife who was born on the 4th of July as "My Firecracker Girl." Congratulations and also many happy birthdays in the future!

NEW YORK VACATION: Esther Calderon and Lee Mallah, together with Lee's granddaughter, Lesley Mallah, attended their cousin, Jeffrey Cassorta's bar mitzvah in Staten Island, NY, during the last week in June. The bar mitzvah boy is the son of Ellen and Neal Cassorta. During the five-day vacation the three Hoosiers visited the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island and other points of interest in the Big Apple.

TERPSICHOREAN: The Jewish Community Center's Dance Academy is starting. Open house for sharing information about a great spectrum of dance classes offered is on Sunday, Aug. 17, at 3 p.m. at the Center.

HERE: Welcome to Mark Levin from Detroit, who will live in Indianapolis.

A HALF A CENTURY: Fifty years ago, on June 22, 1947, Helga and Joe Careskey

were wed at the 10th St. Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation. This happy anniversary was celebrated this year, at The Meridian Entertainment Hall (next to Sunshine Coffee), 116th and Meridian St. Hosts for the champagne brunch were Wendy and Andy Metter, the Careskeys' daughter and her husband; their son, Jeff; the Careskeys brothers with their wives, Irene and Walter Breisacher of California, and Shirley and Bob Careskey, Indianapolis.

Also attending was their wedding Maid of Honor 50 years ago, now Mrs. Ralph Greenburg, from Boca Raton, Fla. Cousins were there from Nashville Tenn. Mr. and Mrs. Roy Shainberg. Cousins from Chicago, Mr. and Mrs. Ed Schear came, as well as a good friend from Middletown, Ohio, Mrs. Paul Finkelman, who came with her daughter-in-law. A huge photo of the couple decorated the room, where many of the 50 guests spoke to congratulate the golden couple.

BETH-EL ZEDECK SISTERHOOD SAYS: We will be baking our round challah for the holidays. Pick-up will be in the kitchen at the synagogue on Sept. 24, 25, 26 and 28.

NEW LIFE: Congratulations to Miriam and Joe Frankovitz, who became grandparents for the second time. On Feb. 12, Neoma Rose, a girl, was born to their daughter, Elana, and her husband, Yoni Levi, in Brooklyn, NY. The baby's great-grandparents are Hencha and Harry Frankovitz, and Yaffa Levy, Tel Aviv. Great-great grandfather is Sam Frankovitz, Indianapolis and the infant's older brother is Avi, 2 years old.

WELCOME: Welcome to attorneys Mr. and Mrs. David Tannenbaum, who are moving to Indianapolis with their three children this summer from New Jersey. Mr. Tannenbaum is with American United Life.

SUMMER FUN: Rose Rappaport vacationed with their children, Elaine and Steven Lev, Evanston, Ill., in South Haven, Mich.

TOWN CRIER

By G.M. COHEN

You have received in the mail the announcement of the speakers for the Block Forum Series at IHC, and as usual top talent will be presenting their views on four different Sunday nights this winter and spring. The series is a contribution by the Jewish community to the intellectual life of the city.

At one time we approached the Jewish Community Center with the idea of a joint forum with noted Jewish speakers, since our city is starved for the kind of stimulation that years ago was possible when the Kirshbaum Center annually provided such a forum, bringing to the city the outstanding Jewish thinkers of the time. This was before the day of TV and the Center, then at 23rd and Meridian St., was crowded on those Sunday nights.

That suggestion was to have been brought to the board of the Center, but as of this day we have never

learned what transpired or if this was ever considered by the Center board.

In any event, we suggest that such a Jewish forum could add much to the intellectual life of the Jewish community. The effect of that kind of stimulation cannot be estimated, but no one would question that this community could very much use the inspiration that some of our national Jewish figures in the arts and religion could provide.

Occasionally one of our congregations or one of their affiliates will bring a national figure into town, but only for the membership of that organization.

We bring this thought to the community for consideration. Such a Jewish forum should obviously pay for itself, or almost so. And the benefit to the Jewish community cannot possibly be overestimated.

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Swiss banks

Continued from page 3
Merin, he said.

The federal lawsuit was filed last October in New York.

Levin has said evidence is piling up that the Swiss were the fences and the banking resources for the Nazi regime.

Some of the claimants, even going to the banks with an account number, were turned down on the basis that they did not have a death certificate for the depositor. Of course, the Nazis did not bother with death certificates for the millions of Jews and others they slew in the camps.

Vogel says he would like to see a swift resolution of the issue for the sake of the survivors, many of whom are elderly and living in poverty. He has no documentary proof of an account for himself, but says the people who do should be the first ones considered.

Next, he would like to see money from the accounts put into a fund administered by the World Jewish Congress for destitute survivors "living on Social Security or less."

Vogel would also like to see that fund enriched with the gold taken from the Jews at the death camps.

"I worked 600 yards in Birkenau from the crematories. I was unloading incom-

ing Jews from every Nazi-occupied country. The *Sonderkommandos* (prisoners assigned to the crematories) had to pull the gold teeth from the victims. That gold was found not only in Switzerland, but in the United States, Portugal, France and England. So who does that gold belong to? Us survivors."

"What the World Jewish Congress should do is force the Swiss government and all the governments who are involved to act in a speedy way before the survivors are going to be gone. pretty soon there won't be any survivors and what's going to happen to the funds? The money's going to stay there. The Swiss will get richer."

Vogel says the survivors are the victims of a number of continuing injustices, including payment by the German government of pensions to retired Nazi soldiers while balking at paying reparations to many Holocaust survivors.

Vogel believes the Swiss knew in the early 1940s what was happening in the camps. He remembers twice seeing Swiss International Red Cross visits at Auschwitz.

"Not one time were they allowed to go into the barracks." Before the Red Cross inspections, he said, the Nazis "would eliminate anyone who

didn't look like a human anymore. Only those people would be standing in the front row who had flesh on them," and they would be forced to respond, if asked, that they were being fed sufficiently and treated well.

But Vogel believes the Swiss knew of the horrors and knew they were seeing a charade.

Eiberger named to JCRC board

Attorney Ronald E. Eiberger has been appointed an at-large board member of the Jewish Community Relations Council. He will serve a three-year term beginning in September.

Eiberger has served as the attorney for the Indiana Medical Licensing Board. He concentrates his practice in the areas of constitutional and civil rights law, entertainment law and litigation. His entertainment law service has brought him attention occasionally as the lawyer for comedian David Letterman.



Judaism taught as 'social science'

A rabbi will teach an "Introduction to Judaism" course to local high school students who will receive college-level credits and, possibly, high school credits for the religious instruction, according to an announcement by Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation.

The congregation has made arrangements with IUPUI for Rabbi Geoff Dennis to teach the course. Dennis, IHC assistant rabbi, will teach the course to high school juniors and seniors and interested adults beginning Aug. 24, from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Students will be admitted to IUPUI as special non-degree students for the three-credit course for tuition of \$318.75, plus a \$35 application fee.

IHC is seeking to arrange

with local high schools for the students to receive high school social science credit for successfully completing the course, the congregation's announcement said.

Rabbi Dennis has worked with Irv Levy, IUPUI director of credit programs, and Ted Mullins, IUPUI religion department chair, to develop the course.

Highlights of the course will include Jewish history and theology, Zionism and Israel and contemporary issues. IHC hopes it might offer additional college credit courses in the future.

For additional information and enrollment applications, contact Marcia Goldstein, IHC education director.

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Micha Gantman, June 14, 1997

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A tour etched in memory

By CHARLES EPSTEIN

It is unfortunate that The Cosmos Touring Co. has an inferior reputation for tours in Europe requiring travelers to be a little hesitant to travel Cos-



mos in the United States. I can assure you that the tarnished European image for Cosmos has no place in the U.S. I have just returned from one of the most exciting tours of New Mexico and Arizona that is exclusive to the Cosmos repertoire. No other tour company offers this amazing trip.

I shall try to relate to you the astonishing highlights of this tour. We arrived in the

Phoenix/Scottsdale area in Arizona. After visiting the Sonora Desert Museum and Old Tucson the air-conditioned bus took us to Boothill, the famous graveyard. There, reverently covered with small stones, is a large Jewish Memorial in honor and recognition of Jewish Pioneers and the Indians they befriended. In Tombstone there just wasn't enough time to eat, shop and see the shows and the O.K. Corral.

In Las Cruces, N.M., we wandered through Old Mesilla Town and visited where Billy the Kid was captured. We also shopped at the stores in Old Mesilla, where the prices were low instead of tourist-rate. After going through the Chihuahuan Desert we arrived at the White Sands National Monument, one of the tremendous highlights of the tour. We took off our shoes and socks so we

could squish our toes in the cool sand. Waves of white sand dunes reminded us of the snow in the Canadian Rockies. We were fascinated with the world's largest gypsum field. While cooling our feet we witnessed young folk rolling in the smooth sand. Fun was had by all just standing barefoot in one of nature's miracles.

Then on to one of the most fantastic sights on the tour. Around 8 o'clock at night 1/2 million bats fly out of the Carlsbad Caverns. We watched sitting in the stone amphitheater built especially for this event. In the morning we rode an elevator to 750 feet below the surface to roam through the caverns covered with giant stalactites and stalagmites. One cannot but be overwhelmed with such sights and new ones just around each and every corner. The wonderment of Carlsbad Caverns is ever etched in our memories.

On through Albuquerque, Sante Fe and Taos where shopping is paramount and, incidentally, slightly expensive. Finally we swerve back into Arizona and another beguiling sight to behold, Canyon De Chelly (pronounced "de-shay"). Picture-taking is the main activity as the two spires of Spider Rock inspire awe. Good bumps are felt as this amazing spectacle of nature comes into view. Snapshots cannot possibly duplicate the swelling of emotion of

being there in person witnessing one of the marvels of stone formations. This National Monument elicits a bow of admiration from its appreciative spectators. Our Indian guide in the park related many of the mysterious legends surrounding this sacred place.

Motoring north into Utah and into Monument Valley was another fabulous sensation as splendiferous monoliths of red sandstone tower majestically against the azure sky. Every twist and turn in the primitive road revealed more beauty. Many scenes from western movies were recognized here but again the appreciation on film cannot be compared to being there in person and witnessing God's amulets to Earth.

The bus continued to the Grand Canyon, Flagstaff, Sedona and the wondrous

stop at a town where the houses seemed to be stuck onto a mountain, Jerome, the vertical village. Save your money for it, because the prices in the Jerome gift stores are really reasonable. Then back to Phoenix for the flight home.

I know I have neglected many more highlights than space allows. But this trip is so special and so thrilling. Cosmos is to be commended for scheduling such an enjoyable tour and at such affordable prices. The accommodations were more than sufficient. This is a terrific tour, a champagne vacation on a lite beer budget.

Cosmos does neglect to inform prospective tourists of the greatest lure of their tour in their catalogues. We had lunch in famous Roswell, New Mexico. Alien burgers, anyone?

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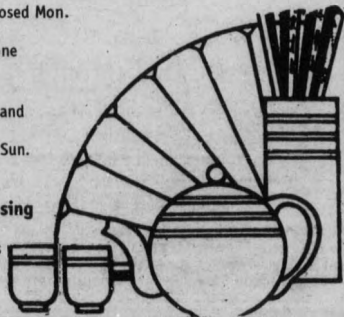
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Nursing homes

Continued from page 2
laws that exist to protect the rights of nursing home residents.

Familiarizing yourself with these laws can provide legal protection for your loved one, should the need ever arise. The laws mandate that residents must receive necessary care and services to reach the highest practical level of physical, mental and social well-being.

Among other items, an assessment of resident need must be conducted within two weeks of admission.

Once you've gathered information and made a list of prospective nursing homes, call and ask some pre-qualifying questions. This will save you time and may eliminate the need for a visit.

Find out about Medicare and Medicaid coverage. Ask about admission requirements, vacancies and waiting lists. It's a good idea to request a brochure, rate schedule, recent newsletter and activity calendar. The more information you can get, the better.

Start scheduling visits to the most promising facilities on your list. You should plan to visit a prospective nursing home more than once and

preferably at different times of the day.

Don't be afraid to drop in for an unscheduled observation as well. Try to have a meal in the dining room and ask about any special dietary concerns.

During the visit, note the physical condition of the nursing home. Evaluate the attitude and care that the staff exhibits toward the residents.

In addition to the staff and administration, talk to residents and their families. Take note of visiting hour convenience and ask about the frequency of physician visits.

When it comes right down to making the final decision, follow your instincts. Only you and your loved one know where you feel the most comfortable. Make your choice based on personal feelings and preferences.

After you've chosen a nursing home, plan for the move accordingly. Most facilities encourage new residents to bring their own furniture and personal belongings to make the new surroundings feel more like home. Frequent visitation from family and friends is reassuring for the new resident.

Commission offers diversity training

A two-day training session in cultural diversity is scheduled for fall by the Indiana Interreligious Commission on Human Equality.

The Oct. 30-31 workshop, "Affirming Diversity, Challenging Racism," will be for limited registration at \$100

per person or \$80 per person if more than one person from the same organization attends.

Facilitators will be Cathy Cox, executive director of the commission, and Jesse Dansby, director of multicultural affairs at Indiana University East (Richmond).

Assisted living

Continued from page 2
nursing home on Medicaid.

Currently the state of Indiana spends \$800 million per year on nursing homes. The cost for nursing-home care for one Medicaid recipient is about \$25,000 per year. Seventy-five percent of the people in nursing homes are paid for by taxpayers.

Assisted-living facilities, by contrast, are more desirable when appropriate and less expensive than nursing homes. The going rate for assisted living is \$21,600 per year. So, from a fiscal as well as a humane standpoint, assisted living is a viable option for the elderly.

Assisted-living facilities in the marketplace today cater mainly to upper-income individuals who pay for themselves.

Severance would like to see state money become available to help low-income individuals into this type of living arrangement. "Advocates for the elderly have been talking about (assisted living) for years and finally state legislators are looking at it, too," said Severance.

But as this style of living becomes more commonplace, it needs supervision. Currently there are no licensing procedures for assisted-living facilities in the state. Anyone can open one and call it assisted-living with no regulations.

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H.B. 1630 will provide the mechanism to define assisted living and to establish licensing guidelines to protect the consumer.

"The intent of the legislation is not restriction," said Rep. Dave Frizzel, (R-Indianapolis) a co-author of the bill. "We are welcoming these facilities into the state and encourage their development. We just want to be sure they are best serving those Hoosiers that will be using them."

The commission has until Nov. 1 of this year to report its findings to the legislature, with the intent of presenting a bill to the 1998 General Assembly that will establish licensing procedures and accompanying rules.

To voice your opinion on the legislation or for more information about assisted living, contact United Senior Action at 634-0872 or your state representative.

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JEWISH POST & OPINION

Worth considering

The Council of Jewish Federations will be holding its annual General Assembly in our city in a few months or so and while the daily press will no doubt record the events during the four or five days, the local Jewish community really stands aside then and, except for those who volunteer to act as guides to direct the delegates to the various sessions going on, so many at the same time, there is not too much involvement otherwise.

Here are the top leaders of America visiting and although there always is one activity where a few of the delegates who are so inclined may participate in a bus ride to view Jewish aspects of the city, that is about it.

A number of rabbis always participate. In fact one activity of every federation is to include a rabbi as one of its delegates with his expenses prepaid. So with so many rabbis in a city at one time, why not arrange for them to deliver sermons at the local congregations Friday night or Sabbath morning, not about the General Assembly or the Council of Jewish Federations or federations at all but just to give the local Jewish community an opportunity to hear the views of rabbis from other parts of North America? There is some problem with those rabbis who do not ride on the Sabbath, but accommodations should be able to be made where necessary.

Another suggestion along the same line would be for one of the top American Jewish leaders attending the General Assembly to address the local community at the Jewish Community Center or at one of the synagogues, not about the CJF but about some current Jewish of general issue.

In other words give the local community a part in the General Assembly other than reading about it in their daily paper or this paper.

While we believe that the paper you are reading is the best Jewish one in America, there are about 70 other editors of Jewish weekly newspapers who will disagree, but on two points we do have a claim which cannot be challenged. We have attended more General Assemblies of the CJF than any other living person, going back to the days when Stanley Myers of Miami or before that of Sydney Hollander of Baltimore were the presidents.

The suggestion here is worth considering. This kind of tie-in can make a difference. To many American Jews the Council of Jewish Federations is another Jewish organization, one not even as well known as the American Jewish Committee. Our proposal then can make a difference.

WASHINGTON — Legislation that would bar health insurance companies from discriminating against people on the basis of their genetic backgrounds, as for instance Jewish women who are believed to have a heightened

susceptibility to breast and ovarian cancer, has won the support of President Clinton. "Americans should never have to choose between saving their health insurance and taking a test that could save their life," he said.

Youths spraying swastikas held

ST. LOUIS — Seven young suspects between the ages of 12 and 17, one of whom was an African American have been apprehended by police

for spraypainting racist graffiti on 11 cars and two houses in the Glasgow Village neighborhood in unincorporated North County.

EDITOR'S CHAIR

Last week we launched a new small but interesting feature, we feel, which will introduce rabbis and their views and outlooks and activities and tell a few things about their congregations and its attributes. The feature as you'll see is by Janice Fine whom we met years ago when we both were active in the National Conference for Ethiopian Jews. She's been wanting to contribute to The P-O in some aspect of American Jewish life and this new feature is one which we think will strike a chord with our readers, many of whom are rabbis themselves or officers of congregations, or merely interested in what goes on in American Jewish congregational life.

For several years now we have protested tying a rope around our neck — ties — and have

Kills 7 Israelis, gets a life term

JERUSALEM — The life sentence imposed by the Jordanian court on the Jordanian soldier who wiped out the lives of seven Israeli schoolgirls and wounded five others was challenged by the mother of one of the victims, who recalled that King Hussein during a condolence call to a bereaved family had said he felt as if he lost one of his own daughters.

"Is this the sentence they would have given for the murder of a princess?" asked Mrs. Ya'ala Meiri.

Reconstructionists add Beth Israel

MAYWOOD, Pa. — Temple Beth Israel here, which considered itself Conservative although it was not a dues paying member, became the 85th Reconstructionist Congregation in the United States as it voted to affiliate with the Jewish Reconstructionist Federation.

not worn one, although we have some reservations about attending services offering a view of the top of our chest. We know we will not be able to find enough who will join our protest so that the silly practice can be discarded, but at least we feel we are doing the right thing.

For one, now that our neck is free to develop as was ordained it has expanded so that when and if we do wear a tie it is now difficult to button the top shirt button.

Nevertheless we wonder if there are any out there who may agree that whoever it was that began the practice started a fashion that is utterly unrealistic. For those who might like to try releasing their necks from any such contractions we promise two achievements. One that they now become innovators and even leaders and too that their necks can then do better the jobs they were created for.

Swiss are coming clean; anti-Semitism is feared

ZURICH — When the Swiss Bankers Association called a news conference to announce publication of the 1,750 dormant accounts in major newspapers in 27 countries, there was one sour note. Israel Singer, secretary-general of the World Jewish Congress which played a role in the final acceptance of responsibility by the Swiss Banks, had a message.

"Keep your money," he told them. "The lists published today are not important if the 18,000-member Jewish minority of this country should suffer from anti-Semitism."

Concerns about a backlash in which the Swiss Jewish community would suffer are not dreams — there has been a rise in anti-Semitism.

The steps to assure fair inquiry into any Jewish accounts were most convincing. Prospective claimants are to contact the international accounting firm Ernst & Young at its branches in New York, Tel Aviv, Sydney, Budapest and Basel.

Claims will be evaluated under a relaxed standard of proof, the ads stated, with a year for them to be filed. In addition a list of accounts opened by Swiss citizens, many of whom may have acted as proxies for Jews fearful of reprisals, should be released in the fall.

The accounts published have a total value of \$42 M. Jewish groups have set the figure as as high as \$7 B.

Swiss Ambassador in Washington, Alfred Defago, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency "we will do everything we can to combat anti-Semitism and every form of racism in Switzerland."

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5. Don't advertise. Forget that there are new potential customers who would do business with you if they were urged to do so.
6. Don't advertise. Forget that you have competition trying to attract your customers away from you.
7. Don't advertise. Tell yourself it costs too much to advertise and that you don't get enough out of it.
8. Don't advertise. Overlook the fact that advertising is an investment in selling — not an expense.
9. Don't advertise. Be sure not provide an adequate advertising budget for business.
10. Don't advertise. Forget that you have to keep reminding your established customers that you appreciate their business.

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Israel concedes, talks to resume

JERUSALEM — With resumption of talks between Israel and the Palestinian Authority the deal that made it possible was concessions by Israel. Israel did win postponement of her withdrawal from the West Bank, but that hardly equalled the two Israeli decisions. One was continued delay in any additional construction at Har Homa and the other was the decision not to permit proceeding of the plan by Miami's Irving Moskowitz to build a 70-unit housing project in the area of East Jerusalem the Palestinians hope will be its future capital.

When Prime Minister Netanyahu stated that he opposed the politically sensitive project in East Jerusalem, that started the process which ended in the resumed talks.

However both Israel and the PLO had sent emissaries to Washington competing for American support of their colliding positions and the U.S. position may also have been a positive factor in renewal of talks.

Argentine Jews finally rise up in anger

BUENOS AIRES — The third anniversary of the bombing of the Jewish Community Center which took almost a hundred Jewish lives found the Jewish community outraged at the failure of the authorities to find those responsible. A crowd of 600 blocked Pasteur Street and a siren went off when the ceremonies began at 9:53 a.m., the exact time of the fatal blast.

Meanwhile a protest took place also in New York where more than a hundred people gathered at noon opposite the Argentine Consulate for a memorial service billed as a "call for justice."

But here the crowd repeatedly booed those members of the government who participated and jeered Ruben Beraja, president of the Argentine Jewish umbrella organization, DAIA.

The crowd repeated the names of the 86 victims as they were read off.

As Laura Ginsberg, the widow of one of the victims, addressed the crowd and began challenging the government the mood changed. Looking straight at the head of the Interior Minister, Carlos Corach, she said "the Interior Minister is still not doing anything," inspiring the crowd to boo him, chanting "Jewish traitor, Jewish traitor."

They also jeered Beraja whose talk was interrupted repeatedly by catcalls, while dozens turned their back as he spoke. He had promised to reveal the names of government and judicial officials who blocked the investigation that was to have been made by the Argentine Jewish Mutual Aid Association, known as AMIA.

Following the speeches scuffles broke out as Corach and the other officials left the site.



WHERE 86 DIED — As the crowds gathered when news of the bombing spread, they viewed a terrible scene of destruction. All the wounded and dead had already been removed.

At noon the crowd filed slowly past the bombing site where a black banner was draped over the new AMIA building under construction. But that was hardly all.

People walked arm-in-arm across the downtown area to the square in front of the central courthouse building where 86 memorial candles were lit and people stayed hugging and crying.

Last week Beraja said he would make public the list of names of government and judicial officials he claims blocked the AMIA investigation, but he refused to do so during the ceremony, asserting, "I reject public vengeance." He added, "I respect

Another one of those zany Jewish affairs

NEW YORK — What may take the cake for the zaniest wedding of all times — there have been ones on football gridirons, on steamships hired for the occasion, etc. etc. but Jennifer Koppelman and Keith Hunt were married in Roslyn Harbor at the family's Stanford White estate in a synagogue built as a replica of Central Synagogue, miles away in Manhattan.

The Koppelmans could afford it; he was until recently the chairman and chief executive of the EMI-Records Group of North America.

No Jews or dogs at Jordan store

AMMAN — The owner of a local supermarket was arrested for displaying a sign that read "no Jews or dogs allowed."

Central Synagogue is on East 55th St in Manhattan. The wooden imitation was designed by Robert Isabell and built over the family swimming pool. Even the stained glass windows of the original were duplicated.

Some 500 guests were thrilled with the unique environment and the occasion.

The groom was Keith Hutt and the pair met two years ago at an acting class at the William Esper Studio in Manhattan.

In this congregation Almost 1 of 5 families are among intermarried

PHILADELPHIA — What does a rabbi make of the fact that 18 percent of the membership are part of interfaith families?

Rabbi Vivian E. Schirm of Or Hadash, a Reconstructionist congregation, decided to start a discussion group and now, according to The Exponent here, the need for an additional group developed so there are two of them, one with eight couples and the second with six couples.

Rabbi Schirm starts each session by asking if there is something they would like to talk about, which usually gets the discussion going.

What is fascinating are the stories of interfaith couples who choose to join a synagogue. One is the son of a Baptist minister who still has strong ties to his faith but had agreed to raise his children Jewish because he feels that does not negate any of his own beliefs. There is the assimilated Jewish woman who married a non-Jew but didn't realize how much her Judaism meant to her until she had children. And there is the Protestant woman who agreed to establish a Jewish home because it meant a lot to her husband while she was unconnected to her own faith.

Many of the non-Jewish spouses wish to participate actively in synagogue life. They sing in the choir, attend adult education study groups and help out in many of the congregations' functions.

JNF Blue Box revival maybe

PITTSBURGH — Whether or not this could be a return to a national program by the Jewish National Fund a Blue Box collection was held here. JNF supporters were requested to bring their filled Blue Boxes to the Jewish Community Center, while others were requested to help in picking them up.

Heading the effort was Eva J. Vogel who has a Ph.D from Yale and was an assistant professor at the City College of New York.

A fall collection is planned during the High Holiday season.

Vocational center wins city contract

DETROIT — The Jewish Vocational Center has won a city contract worth almost \$2.5 M. to operate two Detroit Work Place centers. The centers will serve as training, testing, informational and job search and placement activities.

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OBITUARIES

Norman Rossman, 66, dies; led many Orlando drives

ORLANDO, Fla. — Norman Rossman, who served as chairman of United Jewish Appeal drives for a number of years and was a founding member of Temple Israel, died at the age of 66. He was actively involved with AIPAC and at one time personally escorted Sen. Ed Gurney on a visit to Israel.

He was a devoted supporter of basketball and was among the ownership group that brought the Orlando Magic NBA team to Orlando.



Norman Rossman

Fencer Ralph Goldstein dies in auto accident

YONKERS, N.Y. — Ralph Goldstein, a member of three U.S. Olympic fencing teams, died in an automobile accident outside Bennington, Vt. He was 83 years old and is believed to have suffered a heart attack which led to a head-on collision.

His speciality was in epee and his first competition for the U.S. was in the 1948 Olympics in London. He captained the 1960 team in Rome, and participated in many Maccabiah.

He had returned last week from the national fencing championships in California where he was an official.

Rabbi S. Auerbach succumbs at age 90

ROCHESTER, N.Y. — Rabbi Selig S. Auerbach, who retired after serving for 25 years in Lake Placid, N.Y. died on May 6 at the age of 90. He was the prison chaplain in the Adirondacks as well as chap-

lain at Simmiunt Development Center in Tupper Lake. He spent the last 10 years here where two of his daughters and family live. He was married for 62 years to his wife, Hilda.

Lawrence Chait succumbs at 80

CROYDEN, N.H. — Lawrence Chait, once a legendary figure in the mail order business, died here at the age of 80. He was director of direct mail advertising for Dow Jones & Co., Time, Life, Fortune and R.L. Polk & Co.

before forming his own company in 1957.

Since 1990 he had been lecturing and writing on industry trends and teaching at Colby-Sawyer College in New London, N.H.

Irving Geis, 88, taken by death

NEW YORK — Irving Geis, whose illumination of the wonders of science gave him an international reputation, died at the age of 88. He regularly contributed illustra-

tions to Scientific American on astronomy, astrophysics, geophysics, biochemistry, etc. He illustrated a number of textbooks.

Grace Perlman being mourned

NEW YORK — Grace Kopit Perlman, a founder of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine and a charter member of its Women's Division is being mourned. She was the

first editor of the Women's Division Newsletter and a chairwoman of its annual Women of Achievement luncheon.

Berlin Memorial design rejected

FRANKFURT — The accepted memorial in Berlin for the Jewish victims of the Holocaust which was to include the 6 million names has been sidelined as the competition for the project's design has been reopened. Sharp disagreement among Jewish leaders and German officials, artists and historians has won their point — the project was too colossal. The design by Berlin artist Christine Jakob-Marks called for building a slanting stone monument the size of two football fields.

The winner and eight runners-up from the previous competition as well as 16 internationally known artists and architects have been invited to submit new entries.

A third death at Maccabiah

TEL AVIV — A third death from the tragedy at the Maccabiah as the bridge over the Yarkon River to the stadium crashed from too much weight over it at one time was Elizabeth Swetsky, of Australia. The Australian team was passing over the bridge at the time. A bridge player on the team, she was 47 years old.

In addition to the deaths more than 60 athletes were injured when the bridge buckled beneath them.

The commission of inquiry leveled criticism at not only the contracting company that built the bridge but also at Maccabiah officials.

Dutch museum to hail Nazism

AMSTERDAM — It's difficult to believe but there is a woman in this world who has turned her villa in the Dutch town of Belp into a museum glorifying Nazism. Florentine Rose van Tenningen-Heubel, 83, has gone into it with a vengeance. She has had the columns of her spacious home painted black and red, the colors of the Nazi flag, while crowded in rooms are portraits of Hitler and other top Nazi officials, including one of her husband, a Dutch Nazi, who committed suicide in 1945. She has created a foundation whose goal is turning the villa into a museum and recently told journalist Jack Kooistra that Nazism was a "system of honesty, reliability and ethics."

Mystery Person is named; he is Robert S. Rifkind

Rabbi William Berkowitz of New York won the Mystery Person contest as he named Robert S. Rifkind, president of the American Jewish Committee, correctly. However it took all of the five clues of the contest before that designation.

The first clue stated that the Mystery Person had served in the U.S. Department of Justice and it and the second clue that the Mystery Person was a member of the board of the Jewish Theological Seminary could not have been very helpful. The same for the third clue which stated that the Mystery Person was a graduate of both Yale and Harvard.

The fourth clue, however, was almost a giveaway. It noted that the Mystery Person was the leader of the top American Jewish organization.

Then came the final clue which made this almost the easiest Mystery Person contest ever. It related that the



Robert Rifkind

Mystery Person was chairman of the board of the Jacob Blaustein Institute for the Advancement of Human Rights of the American Jewish Committee.

So many of the recent Mystery Persons have baffled readers of the P-O that the contest authority must have felt that the clues had been made too difficult.

When 160 Jewish women can find something to do

SEATTLE — Whether the 160 Jewish women who showed up for "Turn the Page: an Evening of Jewish Learning" was more or less than was expected, there was no question but that the evening was a big success, according to The Jewish Transcript here.

Hosted by the Women's Division of the Federation, many of the workshops focused on spirituality such as an hour of learning with Rabbi Tamara Miller who went through a typical day of prayer or in another workshop where Joyce Shane, principal of the Seattle Jewish Primary School, offered practical suggestions on bringing more Jewish content in the home, including studying the weekly Torah portion with your family, joining a Jewish book club, sharing Jewish stories, exploring midrash together, connecting ethical values to Torah, singing Hebrew and Jewish songs, etc., etc.

In all there were seven presenters, all of them women, including Rabbi Lisa Gelber, Joanane Katz-Glosser, director of education at Herzl-Ner Tamaid, Rivy Poupko Kletenik, Dvorah Levy, and Rabbi Beth Singer.

Klan

Continued from page NAT 1

supported by a Federal appeals court on the basis of a technicality with the net result that the Klan should reappear. If it should lose, the Klan has announced it would take its case to the Supreme Court.

Cuffley's wife, Sabrina, said the KKK "wanted to be recognized for some good works, to give back a little something to the community."

Other states have been confronted with similar situations, including a Pasco County road in Florida and the Klan also is a participant since 1933 of a one-mile stretch of Highway 65 in Arkansas where the state had originally rejected the application but lost out in federal court.

Yet in another instance in Florida the Klan lost on grounds that the state could not ensure the safety because disturbances were likely to occur if objectors tried to hamper the cleanup involved. The Klan has promised an appeal but has not as yet done so.



'The Nanny' — part 2, old jokes and scruples

By **RABBI ELLIOT B. GERTEL**

If, as I suggested in the last column, *The Nanny* is having some doubts about whether Fran's future with her Gentile boss is *besheret* (destined) or



only *besheret*-by-default, then could it be that the series is showing some scruples or self-questioning? Or has the show been a kind of morality play all along — with a wink, of course, but with self-scrutiny nevertheless? Or is it simply symptomatic of a culture that is just unsure about how to explore morality on TV?

Now it's clear that whether or not *The Nanny* series is concerned about morality, it will giddily forgo propriety in order to get the easy laugh. Thus, in an episode written by Ivan Menchell, Fran's grandmother Yetta suggests that she thought Pearl Harbor was some kind of Hanukkah fireworks. In particularly bad taste was a one-liner from an episode by Jayne Hamil that Eva Braun married faster than the nanny. Why advance jokes about Hitler and his mistress?

Yet there are episodes in which the one-liners camouflage some real moral scruples. One never finds these in marketplace ethics, however, for Fran is always depicted as conspiring at malls, scheming when it comes to sales and income taxes. The nod here is definitely to *I Love Lucy*, and not to Jewish teaching.

But a nod to some classical Jewish concerns is felt at the most unexpected times. When Fran's boss is worried about his oldest daughter sneaking out to date older boys, Fran quips, "I was 17 once, too. I snuck out all the time. Of course, I didn't have a boyfriend. I just wanted to eat bacon." This is an interesting line by writers Nastaran Dibai and Jeffrey B. Hodes. True, it resonates with old Jewish jokes. (We'll come back to Jewish jokes later.) But there is an unmistakable suggestion here that Jewish traditions are ef-

fective by disciplining life to such an extent that sexual indiscretion is blocked by dietary scruples. When Mr. Sheffield's rather loose stepmother whispers an indecent suggestion as to how Fran might seduce her boss, Fran replies, "O, I can't do that. I'm Jewish." The line is provided by Peter Marc Jacobson, co-producer and husband of the star. It reverberates, of course, with the old Yiddish expression, "*Es past nisht a yid*, — a Jew just doesn't behave that way," which was applied to both business and sexual and other improprieties.

Particularly telling, and encouraging, I believe, is a line, though a little off-color,

Yet there are episodes in which the one-liners camouflage some real moral scruples. One never finds these in marketplace ethics, however, for Fran is always depicted as conspiring at malls, scheming when it comes to sales and income taxes. The nod here is definitely to I Love Lucy, and not to Jewish teaching. But a nod to some classical Jewish concerns is felt at the most unexpected times.

that writer Frank Lombardi places in Fran's mouth: "The only protection I have in my purse is a picture of ma." It is one of the few, if not the only, suggestions in the show that Fran finds some moral authority in her mother, who is mostly depicted as a vulgar dresser and *fresser*. The grandmothers are almost always depicted as raunchy, but not, to my recollection, Fran's mother. In classical Jewish teaching, this particular line is reminiscent of a beautiful midrash that Joseph resisted the temptations of Potifar's wife by recalling the image of his mother, Rachel. (This literature is well-presented in Samuel Dresner's book, *Rachel*.)

While I suspect that the line is drawn from general humor, and that Rachel was not a paradigm for it, it may be more authentically "Jewish" in spirit than most of the

one-liners that seem to be, and, as we shall see, are pulled from the fading pages of American Jewish humor.

Some sexual restraint, in the tradition of Joseph of old, has actually been attested on *The Nanny*. The program almost never allows tastefulness to win out over the double entendres, even when the children are a part of the dialogue. But responsible decisions are clearly made about actions. In an episode about a family trip to the Caribbean, written by Rick Shaw, the nanny and Mr. Sheffield decide not to turn up the heat on their relationship after the nanny notes that Sheffield's young daughter is sleeping

yourself disowned."

Unfortunately, the effectiveness of the line by Caryn Lucas is neutralized by the joke that quickly follows about Sylvia's willingness to keep accepting food from the butler even if she has had a rift with Fran. Still, Lucas ends the episode on a rather touching, if near-cynical, note, with Fran's telling her boss' daughter, who intends to be tattooed at age 18, that if the teen gets a tattoo, she won't be buried next to her Jewish husband. When the latter responds that she's not Jewish, Fran whines, "Don't be selfish. You know I live vicariously through you." This is a far more effective comment on the difficulty of some Jewish women in finding Jewish husbands than the tasteless Eva Braun remark.

The problem is that while tattooing is prohibited by biblical law as an imitation of pagan practice and thoughtless mutilation of the body, it is not grounds for exclusion from Jewish burial. So what purpose is served in making Jewish law look so harsh for no rhyme or reason? In an episode a couple of years before, Fran showed the courage of moral conviction in refusing to cross a picket line, thus embarrassing her boss publicly. Yet she attributes this to respect for a dead aunt, not to teachings about fairness to the worker in the Bible and Talmud. One result of a refusal to speak of Jewish religious teachings is to suggest that Fran and her mother believe in some kind of inherent Jewish superiority. Hence, a joke in an episode by Caryn Lucas about Fran's possibly being switched at birth in the hospital, in which Fran is horrified to learn that she was born on Rosh Hashanah because that would mean that most of the Jewish staff, the competent ones, were in temple.

To really understand the mindset of *The Nanny*, one must turn not to Jewish teachings, or to Yiddishisms (which were plentiful but quickly exhausted in the first episodes), but to self-deprecating Jewish humor of the 1960's. For *The Nanny* is nothing more or less than homage to such "humor" which is the real sacred text of the series.

Consider the use of Holocaust associations for "hu-

mor" about the relationship of characters, mentioned above. In expressing her hurt feelings regarding her boss' "taking back" a declaration of love made while the two of them were facing a plane crash, Fran responds to Mr. Sheffield's disclaimer that "friends... don't dwell on the past:" "Our people might have enjoyed *Hogan's Heroes* (a comedy about American prisoners-of-war to the Germans), but that doesn't mean that we are going to go out and drive a Mercedes. All right, we may drive a Mercedes, but it doesn't mean we're going to fly Luftansa — unless we have mileage."

This line by writers Nastaran Dibai and Jeffrey B. Hodes, is of course, intended to be self-mockery of the inconsistency of Jews who trade principle for status. But it takes the guise of a joke about forgiveness, gratuitously raising issues about Jews and Germans and forgiveness completely out of context. It also happens to be a version of an old joke that is assumed to be tasteful because of its "sacredness" at having been around.

The same reverence for "sacred" old Jewish jokes permeated an episode by Rick Shaw which was *The Nanny*'s deep foray into Jewish ritual — namely, the 1997 Passover episode. Mr. Sheffield asks the butler, "Now is this the holiday Miss Fein said you can't eat all day, then stuff yourself, or the one when you light candles, then stuff yourself, or the one when you build a straw hut, then stuff yourself?" No, the butler responds, "I believe it's the one when you hide crackers from small children, then stuff yourself." This motif continues throughout the episode. It is, of course, based upon the old joke about the maid describing the strange rituals of her Jewish employers who eat in the dining room but smoke in the bathroom on shabbat, smoke in the dining room but eat in the bathroom on Tisha Ba'av, and both eat and smoke in the bathroom on Yom Kippur.

The episode adapts the joke in a creative way, and, for one brief moment, during the seder, when the youngest of Fran's wards asks the four questions, there is almost an

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YOUR NAME

By David L. Gold
Installment No. 386

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"Your Name," devoted to Jewish names, is conducted by David L. Gold, founder of the Jewish Family Name File, the Jewish English Archives, and the Association for the Study of Jewish Languages, and winner of the 1991 Directors' Award of the Federation of Genealogical Societies "for distinguished public service in support of genealogy." Additions, corrections, or other comments about this column are welcome. Address: David L. Gold, c/o The National Jewish Post and Opinion, 238 South Meridian St., Suite 502, Indianapolis IN 46225-1024. Professional advice is available in accordance with Bava Kama 85a (a legal-sized addressed envelope and 75 cents in loose U.S. postage should be included). Correspondence in a Jewish language is welcome.

The Bible Code - Part 6

Not having read Mr. Drosnin's book, I don't know whether he has "seen" the "message" *kol yisrael shikel*, but my guess is that consciously or unconsciously he's conveniently overlooked it. Again, those who do not carry out controlled experiments, those with an agenda, those who do not play devil's advocate with themselves, those who tailor the data to suit their foregone conclusions see only what they want to.

A second "message" easily found in the sample grid is in the first eight letters (shin resh pe alef tav he pe resh), where we take the "shin" to be a sin and the pe to be a pe sofet. That spells both *saraf et hapar* 'he burned the bull' or *serof et hapar!* 'burn the bull!' (masculine singular imperative). I don't know what the "message" is, but people with a fertile imagination will surely come up with something.

See how easy it is to find "messages"? And that's in a tiny text (Mr. Drosnin's sample grid contains only 673 letters). Since the Jewish Scriptures contain millions of letters, the mind boggles at the enormous number of "hidden messages" waiting to be "uncovered." Any large quantity of a small number of symbols (here twenty-two) arranged or scrambled in this or that way are bound to yield "messages."

We have thus shown that Mr. Drosnin's "method" will yield other "messages," which he overlooked, and in so doing, we wish to imply that his "method" is so unscientific that it will yield any number of "messages" if applied to any large text whatsoever. His "method," then, is no method of all.

It is implicit in the foregoing that we question Mr. Drosnin's use of the word *message*. Had his method yielded *yitschak rabin yiratsach* 'Yitzhak Rabin will be murdered', that might have been worthy of note, whereas the presence of *yitschak rabin* 'Yitzhak Rabin' in one line and of *rotsch asher yiratsach* 'assassin who will assassinate' (or some other meaning) in another, even if the two strings of letters intersect, requires some "creativity" on the exegete's part to extract therefrom the "message" that Mr. Rabin would be murdered. How far backward should we bend?

We should also question Mr. Drosnin's use of the word *code*, which from our viewpoint is an instance of begging the question (though from his it follows logically from his analysis). He has picked out certain sequences of letters, but he has not proven that they constitute a code any more than the "patterns" which someone might claim to see in the position of the planets and stars when viewed by the naked eye from the Earth constitute messages. Simply put, his "messages" and the astrologer's "horoscopes" are of a kind.

Mr. Drosnin writes that "I have known about this [code] for five years. I have spent many weeks with the Israeli mathematician, Dr. Rips. I learned Hebrew, and checked the code on my own computer every day" (quoted in the advertisement from chapter 1 of his book). We wonder what "learned Hebrew" means. Since that quotation is worded in such a way as to imply that Mr. Drosnin did not know any Hebrew until he became fascinated by the supposed code, it is reasonable to assume that his "learning" consisted of far less than bachelor's, master's, and doctor's degrees, all with honors, all with a double

HEAR O ISRAEL

A vocation thwarted

By MORTON GOLD

There were no CD's in the mail this week, but what follows may be as relevant as any review.

There are many visitors



from Florida who sojourn for part of the summer in the Rutland-Killington area of Vermont where I live. Some of these "regulars" are Robert and Bernice Sandler. I met them last year at the Rutland Jewish Center. Mr. Sandler is a retired professor from the University of Florida and is a contributor to various newspapers who comment on the Jewish experience, the *P&O* included. This article is not about him, even though we have much in common, even graduating from the same high school in Boston (English) several years apart. The subject of this piece, rather, is about his good wife.

During the course of one sabbath eve service, I noticed a sweet soprano in the midst of otherwise deep and indeterminate voices in the congregation. Indeed, it turned out that she is a soprano and one with considerable experience and expertise. She has spent most of her life singing in temple choirs. She allowed, that in 1992 she served as cantor at a temple in Marco Island, FL, and that her husband made a souvenir tape of her davening. I then asked if she wouldn't mind sharing that audio cassette with me, and after a bit of coaxing ("It isn't a professional tape...") she did agree to let me listen to it. Sure enough, the following week she gave it to me at the Oneg after the service asking me to be kind.

It seems that I have developed a reputation as being a big, bad critic! Honestly, when I do have something unkind to say, I also try to find something positive to comment about. In addition, when I do unload, it is always justified, I feel.

After listening to that tape I have to state publicly that Bernice Sandler is a really fine soprano, and sings with taste, sensitivity and ability. (No offense, but her husband should stick to writing and leave the singing to her!)

After returning the tape, I mentioned that she should have become a cantor. To me she had all the attributes of one and was especially suited to singing in a reform setting. What Mrs. Sandler then related to me is the reason I am writing this article.

It seems that back in 1981 she interviewed at Hebrew Union College School of Sacred Music with the idea of becoming a cantor. Whom ever she met "kindly" informed her that among other things she would have to spend a year in Jerusalem, that the course of study was an arduous one and also "implied" that she was too old to embark on such a program of studies. Gevalt and more gevalt.

Readers, I vividly recall that my father of sainted memory was a star in the legitimate Yiddish Theatre. In his mid-forties he changed careers and became a full-time professional cantor. He had apprenticed himself to a certain Cantor Guzinski (the things I remember) and had davened the high holidays for many years and decided to take the plunge, and into an Orthodox shul at that. Recognizing his talents, he eventually became a fellow of the

Cantors Institute of the Jewish Theological Seminary, participated in various national conventions of the Cantors Assembly, etc. All this when he was well into what we now refer to as the "middle years."

With regard to Ms. Sandler, if anybody at Hebrew Union College reads this column, I feel I should let you good people know that someone out there really goofed at that time. "It is not for thee to complete the work, but neither art thou free to desist from it." (Pirke Avot) This idea applies equally to you as well as to her. I feel that a great injustice has been done. While the program at HUC may correctly be a rigorous one, if she was willing to undertake it, you should have been willing to take her on.

Not all cantors want to or have to be bar mitzvah teachers trying to train the unable and the unwilling. I have no objection to those who undertake this form of "Mission Impossible" regularly. On the basis of her ability and professional experience, she should be given the honorary title of Hazzan... speedily in our days. She really IS one whether you do so or not. I believe that would go a long way to right a wrong that was done long ago and simply recognize what is. While I would be the first one to recognize that there is much more to being a cantor than singing, singing (davening) is or ought to be "job 1!" THAT she can do and has done for many years. I can only speculate on how many others are in the same situation as she. How about it guys?

Morton Gold may be reached at 12 Avenue B, Rutland, VT 05701.

Center officials learn courtesy

DETROIT — Determined to improve the way the Jew-

ish Community Center of Metropolitan Detroit treats its members, six administrators are headed for Disneyworld at Orlando to participate in a four-day program of making members feel welcome. A \$25,000 grant made it possible for them to learn what service is all about.

major in Hebrew language and Bible studies, secured at the best non-religious university in Israel. If so, it is more than likely that he has no feel for the languages of the Jewish Bible as it has come down to us. Indeed, since Mr. Bruni tells us that Mr. Drosnin's "last book was a best-selling biography of Howard Hughes," we see this is not exactly a specialist writing in his field.

To be continued next week.

Crazy for attention

By JUDY CARR

I was shown an invitation to a party at an ambassadorial residence. Its aim was to make the so-called mentally handicapped part of society, for which purpose rehabilitation centers were to be built. The party boasted a Master of Ceremonies and a public relations official.

The invitation was not targeted at the mentally ill — is mental illness a handicap or just another illness? No, they were not invited. Those invited were the rich and famous, the ladies in their diamonds and the eligibles. Those considered a part of society.

I told all this to a friend who had a brush with psychiatrists. She said it was ridiculous and pathetic. "Can't these people find anything to do with themselves?" she said.

There are those who would judge a society by the way it treats the mentally ill, the retarded and those with social difficulties. I do not think any society could be kinder to these people than Israel is. Yes, true kindness from the heart.

An unhappy schizophrenic man lives in the area where I live. He owes at most of the shops, but the shopkeepers talk to him and treat him humanely and let him owe the money a bit longer. At the cigarette shop, he always gets his cigarettes. He is a lonely person, but he is considered and chatted to by neighbors. He gets his government allowance and a low-rental apartment and sometimes he works a little. What more can society do — with or without ambassador's parties?

Rehabilitation of the mentally ill is well organized, without much officialdom. The sufferer is given an interview with a social security doctor and if circumstances show it, he is granted an allowance. The allowance is quite small, but synagogues and volunteers help out. People give clothes and food and he gets by.

No one is allowed out of a mental home until it is seen that he has a place to go to. He may share a flat with another patient who has accommodation or go home to family. Putting people out on the streets is unthinkable. There is supervision by social workers and

doctors.

Of course most people who have had these crises get over them. They get jobs and if they are not earning enough the allowance is continued. When you go for an interview for a job, if you appear all right, no one is going to ask you if you have been in a mental home.

The real trouble is army service, for which you may be rejected or have your profile lowered. This is a serious stigma and can lead to suicide or desertion or further breakdown. Some bigger jobs or places on a moshava or a kibbutz will be closed to them.

Accept these limitations and you can get on quite nicely. There are those who feel isolated and lonely and cannot find a partner. This is tragic, but you can not blame anyone.

So why the gala party for charity? Why are the mentally ill suddenly a cause to be taken up?

Perhaps a fine lady want-

FINE'S FINDINGS

Rabbis Labowith

By JANICE FINE

(a continuing look at Broward County, Fla., rabbis)

Jewish Renewal, Temple Adath Or, 11450 SW 16th St., Davie, FL 33325.

Rabbis Shoni and Phillip Labowith — Focus on the woman:

We are co-rabbis. In our synagogue we experience the spiritual and creative in dance and music during prayer.

Our Friday evening service begins with Yoga, our Mid-eastern influence. I truly feel blessed with God and Jewishness; my father and grandfather were rabbis. And they were proud of my decision. It's not the gender — it's the feeling and the responsibility.

I enjoy the new trends in expression. We each pray in different ways, not to divide Judaism, but to add to our qualities. As in the past, we shall accept diversity, different connections. There is no absolute — just the opposite, constant change in nature and in Judaism.

A Chasidic rabbi asked,

ing to up herself socially got the idea that the "cause" would make her a queen of society. She must be a bit nuts. She must be crazier than most of the people in Israel's mental homes. She thoroughly deserves to be hospitalized and given a few of the more drastic treatments.

Anyway, Israel does not object to a bit of craziness. Israel absorbed concentration camp victims, immigrants from prehistoric societies, intellectuals, the lot. Not all of these people behaved as though they were being presented to the Queen of England at a Royal Garden Party.

Or can we say that not all of them were suitable for embassy parties?

But no one thought any the worse of them for that or treated them as though they were not part of society.

Judy Carr may be reached at POB 6431, Tel Aviv, mx 61 063 Israel

FLEISHMAN'S FLIGHT

The friendly Jewish skies

By ALFRED FLEISHMAN

This is not a column about the problems of Israel. At least not the political ones. But it is rather one on a subject that involves the very future of Is-



rael and in a very big way.

I'm referring to El Al Airlines and the work they are doing to increase interest and tourism in Israel and the Holy Land.

There is no other airline in the world in my opinion, that is so devoted to its country of origin and its importance to the economy and history of a nation.

I have watched the development and traveled on El Al as early as 1955. I have gone more than 50 times since then.

I had the honor of flying on its first non-stop overseas flight when it still used prop type airplanes. I believe its first trips were in 4-engine British turbo-prop airplanes when they were the first to fly non-stop from New York to Tel Aviv.

And how I remembered the landing in Tel Aviv! As soon as we saw land in Israel the passengers began to hear songs like Hava Nagila. They were very exciting and gave many a thrill. It seems like we landed in the middle of a cotton field in those days. That's how crude the airfield seemed.

That's a far cry from the modern Ben Gurion airport we now land in. They seem to unload the planes and their over 400 passengers and baggage in a shorter time than it takes in New York. With a lot less customs trouble also. That has changed over the years.

But travel on El Al in those days was a real, exciting and unusual experience. It is now! As soon as the airplane took off and the seat belt sign was turned off it seems like the plane came alive. Visits were made up and down the aisles by the passengers, who seemed to come from one end of the plane to the other.

The men who davened and

prayed with their tfilim and tasasem on as the hours changed were an experience. Each time. I had suggested to many non-Jewish friends that this was an important part of their experience. Once a Catholic priest complained to me that on his trip there were no groups of men who were praying. He looked for them.

In the early days the people were all in the aisles to the extent that the airline staff had a hard time getting the food served because the aisles were so full of people going from one end to the other.

Often groups going to Israel greeted others on the trip as if they were long lost, and had not seen each other for years. Sometime the pilot needed to turn on the seat belt light to get people to take their seats long enough to serve the food. They were great problems for the crew. And now they, the crew, seem better trained.

Even today, El Al is one of the very few that fly non-stop to Israel from New York. And they have to do so under a heavy handicap, since they do not fly on Friday night or Saturday. One usually has to take an early morning on Saturday night-Sunday flight to make it to N.Y.

As it stands now El Al seems to have the best public relations staff, with constant pictures, brochures and promotional material that is most interesting, informative and practical.

Trips on El Al today include every seat having its own television set and a means of letting the passengers know where they were and their estimated time of arrival to Israel.

The only thing I missed the last time I was on El Al was the Israeli music played as the plane was first over Israel and before it landed at Ben Gurion. That was always exciting to me and I hope that it will some day be reinstated.

Every Saturday most TWA and other airlines land full loads. Many of them seem to be Jews. El Al is missing much of that. It must involve many thousands of dollars in revenue.

El Al today is most important to Israel and very much part of its economy. I hope its

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Turn to tradition brings rifts in Reform

By SUSAN RUBIN WEINTROB

In the midst of our right-to-choose decade has come an amazing strengthening of traditional religious beliefs. Returnees to Jewish tradition have dominated each movement in American Judaism, incorporating more ritual and observance into their services and guidelines.

Jews and Christians alike are attending religious services more, but unlike the Christian community, the Jewish population is shrinking. Predictions are that this trend will continue into the 21st century, with a smaller but more observant American Jewish community. Today, the bulk of American Jewry is unaffiliated or totally non-observant. These individuals simply look outside of traditional Judaism for the stability and strength to withstand the stress and change in contemporary life.

Liberal Judaism has its share of "at-risk" Jews. More of its congregants slip into a secular Christian life-style than any other segment of affiliated Jews;

As a member of liberal congregations from 1976-1996, I have seen a change in Reform and to a certain extent Conservative Judaism's approach toward Jewish values and traditions. A combination of two factors has changed the thrust of liberal Judaism: intermarriage and Jewish ignorance.

For example, former UAHF [Reform] President, Alexander Schindler attempted to reverse the trends that began during the years of Classic Reform. National leaders in the Reform movement have begun to encourage observance, learning and community. Hebrew has gradually come back into the service. Many rabbis and cantors now don tallitot and kippot. Shabbat morning services are again part of weekly schedules. Reform journals urge their members to learn and do more that is Jewish.

While Reform leaders proclaim that its members are informed Jews who choose the observances and traditions that are individually meaningful, many congregants equate Reform with non-observance. On the pew level, lack of tradition is still tradition. One person at a Reform congregation's Torah study explained why she knew so little about Judaism: "I wasn't raised observant; I was raised Reform."

How are individual congregations handling the rejection of the ideals of the Classic Reform movement? Older members feel swept aside. Their lack of knowledge of Hebrew makes them feel like guests at their own services. Classic Reform's Protestantization of Jewish prayer and ritual are no longer encouraged — yet new Reform style emphasizes on participation and tradition leave many feeling the services are unorganized or ultra-Orthodox. One person told me that recent services in his congregation were practically

Chassidic because Hebrew songs were included. Another long-time Reform congregant said, "Let's bring back a dignified service in English. Let the rabbi lead the service — that's what we are paying him for — to pray for us."

While tallitot and kippot are seen at many Reform services now, there have been heated discussions among some members as to whether these traditional garments should be available in the building. A local congregational board voted that it was OK to place kippot on a table outside the sanctuary, but not tallitot. The argument ran that to have this availability would coerce people into thinking they had to wear them. There would no longer be any choice.

This coercion/ choice argument has been used repeatedly. Yet many Reform congregations now have bent to include more choice. Some offer kosher or vegetarian options for their more observant members. While most do not have strictly kosher kitchens, few currently serve treif at dinners. Reform has traveled a long way since the first Reform ordination in Cincinnati when shellfish was served at the luncheon, causing observant Jews to walk out. Still, this attitude of dropping rather than reforming Jewish law continues to affect many Reform Jews. One board member of a congregation commented that she voted against having a kosher or vegetarian option, because she didn't want families who were kosher telling others what to do. The reality is that the opposite has occurred for years. The stress on inclusion of all members voiced by United American Hebrew Congregation [UAHC] congregations seems, even today, not to include Jews who choose observance.

There is no doubt that the trends toward tradition have not reached all liberal Jewish institutions. As my children approached summer camp age, I began calling different camps in the area to evaluate their programs. The Reform camp I called was not kosher, although the person answering the phone told me they no longer served pork or shellfish.

When asked about what was done on shabbat, the response was that an atmosphere was created, rather than any specific programs. I finally asked what specific programs did contain Jewish content. The person on the telephone could not really tell me.

"We just don't want to shove Judaism down the kids' throats," was the response. Several camps down the telephone list, I found one which was different. Not only were kashrut and shabbat observed, but the camp director enthusiastically described how the staff infused spirit into teaching Hebrew and Jewish and Zionist history. All services were led by the campers. When we talked about shabbat programs, he told me it was an experience the campers would never forget. Two days later, he called me back to see if I

had more questions. His own sincere enthusiasm, knowledge and commitment won me over. My children's reaction after their first summer? "This is how I wish Judaism could always be."

The ambivalence with defining choice in the new Reform movement is not confined to the Midwest where I live, but rather is nationwide. Most often the choice is to allow no choice. An example was seen in a recent Women of Reform Judaism pocket calendar a local sisterhood was selling. They were quite handsome, but I noticed that the times for the beginning and end of shabbat were not included. Thinking this was an error, I wrote a cordial letter noting the omission. The letter I received from their staff told me that the times were intentionally not included because Reform women work and thus cannot always observe the times for shabbat. It is their choice, therefore, to light candles when they want. I discussed this situation with the local Reform student-rabbi. I told her that I thought the Reform movement was about informed choice. She responded, "If you want that kind of choice, you have to look elsewhere."

I am not sure if she realized the consequences of that answer. She herself bought a calendar from the Conservative movement. I ordered one from Lubavitch. Whether we lit candles on time or at all was now our choice, for we had the appropriate information. The choice of the Reform calendars can be compared to the choice in elections under the old Soviet system. Voters had a choice to vote yes or no for the candidate, but unless they wanted to wind up in Siberia, they voted yes.

There is no doubt that many Reform Jews continue to view observance as a type of Siberian exile. I discovered this during a discussion one Reform congregation had about sabbath observance. Certain committee members and the student-rabbi were told that they had to attend meetings on shabbat. "Reform Jews have the option to not observe," was the reason given. Yet one committee chair spent shabbat with family, encouraging her children to feel that this day was special. She was told she was being hypocritical for wanting to schedule the meeting on another day. This committee member told me that her rabbi was "perfectly comfortable" with shabbat meetings, and did not support her efforts to observe shabbat.

At times, the outright hostility shown toward tradition and its observers borders on self-hate. I was told of one board of trustees meeting where members discussed the inclusion of traditions new to the congregation. The meeting became so heated that an older and active member on both the local and national level shouted that observant Jews should not live in his town.

Wondering if a return to tradition had placed individuals outside the confines of Reform Judaism, I called David Dosamentes, associate director of synagogue management of the national office of UAHC, to discuss Reform's approach to traditions and observances. Classic Reform is dead, he told me, except for a few isolated congregations. Reform Judaism now encourages observance of shabbat and kashrut, learning and using Hebrew — they encourage choices that are real choices. As far as meetings on shabbat, he told me, except in case of emergencies, committees and boards should not meet on shabbat, and certainly should not discourage sabbath observance for congregation members who wish to follow it.

Marcia Elbrand, Northeast Lakes Council regional outreach coordinator, echoed his attitudes, noting that the 1990s Reform Judaism is one that incorporates a return to tradition.

Agreeing that the years of Classic Reform were over, she said she would encourage programs which "help people grow in Jewish observance." I also called Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati to speak to the rabbinical staff to ask whether student-rabbis should meet or encourage committee meetings on shabbat. The secretary told me, "I don't have to ask a rabbi. The answer is NO!"

The years that I belonged to a small congregation served by Reform student-rabbis allowed me to see an evolution. A number of years ago during a break in the Yom Kippur service, one student rabbi sneaked off to the non-Jewish organist's home to snack on a pepperoni pizza. (The organist told on him.) More recently, the students have remained in the sanctuary to pray or talk to any congregant who wished. More student-rabbis wear tallitot and kipot during services, more include Hebrew. While one recently admitted that the word "Orthodox" was a negative by-word for any tradition that Reform Jews had dropped, fewer political messages are heard from the bema about the horrors of Reform's more observant cousins. The sermons often deal with the Torah portion and not politics. When, for a time, a rabbi dropped most of the Hebrew and traditions in her shabbat services, one irate congregant told her, "If I wanted to be a Unitarian, I would!" The Hebrew songs and prayers were reinstated.

Some Reform rabbis and student-rabbis I encountered were unaware or resented that their congregants were knowledgeable and observant. One student-rabbi neglected to announce the page in the Chumash corresponding to the Torah reading. When asked to do so, she sniffed, "I didn't know any of you could follow it." Many seders or Torah studies are on such low levels that few are intellectually, much less spiritually, moved. It has been my experience that during bar or bat mitzvah preparation, some children are discouraged from learning more than the minimum. One student-rabbi wouldn't allow a child preparing for Bar-Mitzvah to participate in Friday night services as a learning experience until ordered to do so by the Religious Chair.

It is clear that if the search for strong spiritual encounters is not found, many will look elsewhere. One convert to Christianity told me she was attracted to Christianity through the Jews for Jesus movement, where she found "a deeper truth" and "fulfillment." She told me that her parents were Reform Jews, who didn't discuss religion much. Holidays were not celebrated; traditions were unknown. During the course of our conversation, I found she was unaware that Judaism even offered spirituality or depth of religious conviction. Today, she is a baptized Catholic with several children being raised within an evangelical Catholic group. They are taught nothing about Judaism, except that their mother was a Jew, fulfilled by converting to Christianity.

While this episode is anecdotal, unfortunately too many Jews, illiterate in their own traditions, are attracted to cults or religions that are imbued with meaningful rituals and discipline. This is the consequence of many Jews thinking that restrictions against them were because of the amount of tradition practiced. Prejudice is blind to those differentiations. Klan members who deface synagogues could not care less if kashrut is maintained inside the walls. Aryan Nations won't stop publishing hate pamphlets if English is used in services or if tallitot are banned. The facts of history prove this. Hitler and his followers arose in the Europe's most assimilated and liberal Jewish community.

What will happen if we turn our backs on tradition is that we will lose the many at-risk Jews who are tenuously attached to Judaism: Without a core of values and traditions, Judaism might as well be a social action club.

"Tradition and ritual are only for the ignorant or superstitious," an older gentleman told me one day. Yet today, intelligent people of all backgrounds are intrigued by religious tradition.

I was asked to speak before a group of university women who read mysteries written by women writers. The group had enthusiastically selected "The Ritual Bath," by Faye Kellerman. The main characters are Orthodox Jews and the setting is a yeshiva. I was curious as to their choice of reading, as none in the group were Jewish. The group's organizer told me this book "invited the reader

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"Ill fares the land..."

By RABBI SAMUEL SILVER

The *Forward*, once socialist, then New Dealish, always liberal, rejoices over Laborite victories in England and France. Which prompted the paper's



Meyer Rock to do a long piece indicating that the United States leads all other industrial nations in economic inequality.

Wage earners in the U.S. get lower pay, work longer hours, suffer from poorer retirement privileges than their counterparts in England, Germany, France, Italy, Japan, Canada, etc. Seventy percent of our nation's wealth is in the hands of 10 percent of the population. The country is enjoying unprecedented prosperity, the stock market is soaring, but the nation's working people can't keep up with the Dow Jones. And corporate America has effectively defanged the labor unions.

Not so many years ago one-third of the working people of this country belonged to labor unions; now the ratio is 15 percent. And workers in the other G-7 countries have another advantage over those here: we're the only one without socialized medicine. So a person who has surgery in Detroit must pay lots of money, whereas the same operation in nearby Windsor, Ontario, costs the patient hardly anything.

I.B. Singer's flaws

The late Isaac Bashevis Singer was the only Yiddish writer who won the Nobel. He was a word-weaver par excellence, but when it came to moral character, there was much to be desired.

That lamentable fact is detailed in a new biography by Janet Hadas, which is reviewed in the self-same *Forward* by Miriam Shmulevitch-Hoffman. A womanizer who refused to look after his only son, a husband who virtually ignored his wife, a dabbler in

literary erotica and the supernatural, Singer virtually ridiculed the beliefs of his own father, a genial rabbi.

Jewish critics felt his writing was inferior to that of his brother, I.I. Singer ("Brothers Ashkenaz"). Saul Bellow, who translated one of Bashevis' earlier works, *Gimpel the Fool*, once said that even though Bashevis was a vegetarian, he drank human blood. Chaim Grade, a superb Yiddish writer who, in the opinion of most critics, really deserved the first Nobel given to a writer in Yiddish, lamented that the award to Singer was a tragedy.

The only praise now being accorded to Singer personally is that he honored his mother; that is why he adopted her name as his middle name.

Circle's centennial

Another milestone this year is the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Workmen's Circle, the Arbeiter Ring.

In connection with the anniversary, Fishel Kutner is collecting memorabilia with regard to the various branches of the Circle. In the *Forward* he is asking people in various cities to send him records, minutes, descriptions, names of leaders of branches in the cities of Phoenix, Tucson, Kansas City, St. Joseph, St. Louis, Dallas, Fort Worth, Galveston, Houston, San Antonio, Waco, Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver, and Winnipeg. Send materials to him at 11 Tanglewood Way, San Mateo, CA 94403.

Tale of turbulence

During the long standstill in negotiations between Israel and the PLO, there was a lot of turbulence in Israel.

The front page of one issue of the *Algemeiner Journal* recorded a lot of commotion. There was the near-downfall of the Netanyahu government which, after a stormy session, survived a lack of confidence vote by a mere 5 points; it was 55-50. Then there was the successful first reading of a Knesset measure to invalidate conversions in Israel by non-Orthodox rabbis. That precipi-

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She worked like a horse

By YAACOV LURIA

When I was a kid in knee pants in the 1920's, baseball was pumpernickel and cream cheese to me.

Those were the years when



Babe Ruth — the mighty Sultan of Swat himself — was at his peak. It was a great thing to be what I was — a New York Yankee fan. But the summer I was 11 my mother took me to a kokhaleyn in the Catskills, and for two whole months I forgot all about baseball and Babe Ruth. As you will see, I got terribly worked up about a pennant race of another kind.

Kokhaleyn? In Yiddish it means "cook for yourself." The one my mother took me to was a rambling farmhouse, a hodgepodge of 15 musty rooms two miles away from the village of Kerhonkson. Each room housed a whole family for the summer. The women cooked on three or four wood-burning stoves in a common kitchen on the ground floor. During the day it wasn't too different from the teeming city streets from which we had escaped — a noisy, bustling place with far too many people squeezed into it. Only at night it became peaceful. Then mosquitoes hummed, crickets chirred, frogs croaked, and bats flew in through the open windows. That's what we had come for: the country.

The pennant race? That was the contest between the two owners of the kokhaleyn, an elderly couple named Yankel and Shana. Though they were man and wife, they were locked in a struggle to outdo each other. In a way it was just as exciting as baseball.

I can hardly remember Yankel without his horse and buggy. A scrawny, gray-bearded man, he seemed to belong to his horse Ivan. What a rich horse smell Yankel had about him! When he mounted the buggy, he would sink into a blissful web of silence, guid-

ing Ivan with one hand and rolling cigarettes with the other. Each morning when he drove into the kokhaleyn yard with groceries from the village, he looked as cocky as a jockey who had just brought in a steeplechase winner.

Shana was a dark, leathery-faced mountain of a woman with a round tightly-woven sheytel (wig) perched like an upside down bird's nest on her head. She was the manager, the practical one. She kept the accounts, milked a small herd of cows, and tended a large vegetable garden.

Now for the rivalry between them. During the day the kitchen was the nerve center of the place. Imagine 15 women trying to cook all at once on three or four stoves! The pushing and the screaming and the pots clattering to the ground — it was like an explosion in a gunpowder plant! But there was Shana hovering like a mother hen,

separating the women gently with soft words. "Because Moses beat a rock — not a person. God forbid! — God would not let him into the Promised Land. The angels fill heaven with tears when people on earth are angry."

She pleaded and she flattered and she hugged. And after peace had been restored, a broad smile crinkled her brown cheeks and her eyes shone like fresh blackberries. With her funny, snub nose she looked like one of the giantesses in a book of fairy tales I had once taken out of the library. She was the good giantess, I remembered, who saved the children lost in a forest. At such times Shana pulled so far ahead of Yankel he wasn't even in the running.

But the evening was Yankel's time of glory. After supper he sat on the porch steps, rolled a cigarette, and began telling stories in Yiddish. Quickly he filled the

Continued on page 14

MISCONCEPTIONS

Arguments for a next life

By RABBI REUVEN BULKA

Misconception: Belief in the future world has no currency in this age of rationalism.

There is an assumption that a thinking individual can-



not comprehend the idea of a world beyond this world.

The Talmud adduces some measure of proof for the existence of a future beyond this world by arguing as follows: One who has never existed is born into life. How much more so is it likely that one who has once lived should again be born into life!

The purist will argue that this is no proof, and the purist is technically correct. It is not a proof, but it is an argu-

ment that serves to at least counter the claim that belief in a future world is preposterous. There is evidence for such future world eventualities in day-to-day encounters.

Put another way, the idea that after life there is nothing, that death signifies the absolute end to life, is fraught with difficulties of its own. If it is true that death is the absolute finale for an individual, then this is true for society as a whole. What then is the meaning of life, if it all ends in nothingness?

Belief in an afterlife simply means that death is not the end of life; just as there must have been something before birth, so must there be something beyond death. We do not know the precise details of that future life, but the idea that there is a future is not as irrational as it may seem. One may even argue that the rejection of such belief leads to more irrational, even irresponsible behavior.

Toward Zechariah's dream

By SAMSON KRUPNICK

As we reach the traditional three weeks of mourning for the catastrophe that befell our people with the destruction of both our Temples, we need a



sobering evaluation of our present situation regarding our security and our political stance.

The Midrash describes this period as "... these are the days of distress from the 17th of Tammuz to the 9th of Av." They began with the longest fast day on the 17th of Tammuz (from 3:57 a.m. to 8 p.m.) and concluded with the longest complete fast day (25 hours) on the 9th of Av. The customs of this period become more stringent as the month of Av begins. During the entire three weeks there were no weddings nor any festive occasions observed.

The first fast day commemorated the breaching of the wall of Jerusalem by Nebuchad-nezzar in 586 B.C.E. leading to the destruction of the First Temple and the same operation by Titus in 70 C.E. and the destruction of the Second Temple. Other related sorrowful incidents identified with the fast of the 17th day of Tammuz included the shattering of the Tablets by the cessation of the daily sacrifice (The Tamid); the burning of the Torah scrolls in the sanctuary by Apostomos; and the erection of an idol on the premises of the First Temple. The generally accepted custom of depriving oneself of eating meat and drinking wine (the symbols of joy) apply to the nine days preceding Tish'a B'Av. However some observe this custom throughout the weeks.

Clearly these days are days of serious contemplation and stock taking. The Sages attribute the destruction of the First Temple to rampant idol worship and concomitant immorality. They pinpoint the basic cause of the destruction of the Second Temple upon "sinat achim" (internal hostility

and violent hatred).

In our days as we observe with joy and gratitude to the Almighty our 50th anniversary of the miraculous State of Israel, we must learn from the mistakes of our predecessors and join together to strengthen ourselves internally and to face our hostile neighbors with a united front. Idol worship here is non-existent, unless one considers the wild scramble "to get rich quickly," a late arrival to Israel, as "idol worship."

The basic problem that we must solve at all costs is the unification of our people at least in facing external forces. In this respect we have failed

prime minister has a specific plan and map, assuring full autonomy to the Palestine Authority (no state, no Jerusalem divided, and no wide open refugee return). Minister Arik Sharon and the prime minister have an alternate plan and map that could be a realistic basis for a permanent settlement. However the use by Arafat of his "police" to direct attacks and acts of violence is totally unacceptable to us and to the United States.

Clearly Arafat chooses to use this method as pressure, together with the United Nations and the European Union as additional political pressure. To assist these pressure

The Midrash describes this period as "... these are the days of distress from the 17th of Tammuz to the 9th of Av." They began with the longest fast day on the 17th of Tammuz (from 3:57 a.m. to 8 p.m.) and concluded with the longest complete fast day (25 hours) on the 9th of Av. The customs of this period become more stringent as the month of Av begins. During the entire three weeks there were no weddings nor any festive occasions observed.

miserably. A new government was elected and a new foreign policy was approved by the electorate, different from that of the previous government. We have a peace with Jordan and with Egypt, and some agreements with several Arab nations. We are negotiating with the Palestine Authority on a different basis. The Rabin-Peres government promised Yasser Arafat all that he desired, on the faulty assumption that the result would be a lasting peace. They negotiated as terror prevailed throughout Israel.

The Netanyahu government will not negotiate to the accompaniment of terror. It will not tolerate the "police" of the Palestine Authority leading attacks upon our yishuvim. It will also not make any redeployments now, preferring to deal with a permanent solution. The

sources come our own Opposition representatives and accept eagerly the invitations of Arafat, Hussein and Mubarak to come and to serve as a method of weakening the influence of the government of Israel. They apparently do not realize that they are being used by these elements.

This was the practice of Shimon Peres, of Yossi Beilin and now of Opposition leader Ehud Barak. Their actions are contrary to the best interests of Israel, and border upon treason. In a democracy, only an elected representative or his delegate is authorized to conduct the foreign affairs of the state. It is high time that the Opposition learn this, or proper steps should be taken to forbid Opposition interference with Israel's foreign affairs.

Why must we be making the same mistakes as our fore-

No cucumbers in Israel

Normally, the summer months here are supposed to be a dead period from the journalist's point of view, with little or no news of any importance. In Hebrew it's known as the "cucumber season," and editors, at a loss for headlines, usually blow up insignificant stories as if they were hot news.

This year there is no cucumber season. There are plenty of headlines reporting on genuine and significant news — ranging all the way from the collapse of the bridge at the Maccabiah, to the nationwide strike called by the Histadrut which crippled the country and cost the economy hundreds of millions of dollars — all over a nit-picking issue.

Then there is also the great controversy over the new national budget, with three elements tugging in different directions: 1. Netanyahu, the Bank of Israel, the Minister of Finance and all serious economists, who seek to cut the budget to keep the economy on an even keel and prevent inflation. 2. The military establishment, headed by the minister of finance, which is seeking a boost of billions in its budget to keep the country strong against the threats of war from Syria and maybe the whole Arab world. 3. The social welfare elements who demand billions more to provide housing, better education, better health benefits, and to elevate the economic status of hundreds of thousands of Israelis who live below the poverty line.

All three can make a good case for their cause and are busily engaged in propagandizing for their point of view, with all the accompanying dire threats of what can happen if funds are not made available.

Then, of course, we still have headlines about putting the peace process back on track, about trying to find some common ground between the ultra orthodox and the secularists — and that still does not exhaust the real problems facing us on a daily basis, such as the catastrophic toll of lives taken by road accidents — and much more.

No, there are no cucumbers in Israel this summer.

fathers in the days of the Second Temple? Only disaster can result. We have a solid, viable and successful State. Let us unite to keep it so! Our prophet Zechariah, predicted the transformation of the fast

of the 17th of Tammuz and of the other fasts: "They shall be to the house of Judah, joy and gladness and cheerful feasts; therefore love the truth and peace."

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SOCIAL CALENDAR

By Jean Herschaft

What do the Firebird, the Kaplan Penthouse, children and grandchildren, share in common? A family event, for the first time, staged by Yeshiva U. Women's Organization, whose architect, the chairman of its board, was Dina Pinczower.

It was at the 69th Annual Spring Luncheon, Lincoln Center's Kaplan Penthouse. The Firebird was the ballet which all guests proceeded to, close by at the New York State Theater, the pride and joy of Lincoln Center, which is its opera/ballet home.

It marked a new concept for the popular annual YUWO luncheon — having it on a Sunday afternoon and combining it with the enchanting performance by the ever popular New York City Ballet.

Ms. Pinczower explained: "In changing our format, I am pleased to see that we have been able to include in our audience many more spouses, children and grandchildren to make this festive occasion a true family event. Moreover, it is a first time introduction to the warm scene of the Kaplan Penthouse/Ballet's Firebird as well as the family luncheon and to see and hear Dr. Lamm."

At the helm of YU for 20 years, he always makes the presentation to the honorees. The two angels of this special cultural success were Frances Durst Schub, mother and grandmother and wife of Dr. Martin Schub, an alumna of YU and YU's Albert Einstein College. Wife Frances is president of the sisterhood at Congregation Ahavath Torah of Englewood, N.J. She has been involved on the national leadership level of YUWO.

A graduate of Finch College, Frances is also a career woman heading Events, an event and planning firm in Englewood. She is part of the Presidium of the women's group of its Bergen County Chapter. Ramaz School, U.J.A. and Amit share her time.

Dr. Lamm presented her with a hand painted wooden charity box.

Dianne Wassner, the other honoree, received a framed parchment of the "Blessing of the Kohanim (Blessing of the Children)" in English and Hebrew. Although Mrs. Wassner has no children of her own, she and her late husband supported many causes for children, including Beth Avraham Orphanage in Israel and YU's Torah Chesed fund to provide food for needy YU students.

The very striking Dianne was born in Lvov, Poland, and studied music in New School of Social Research. She is a member of Kehilath, Jeshurun and Congregation Beth David, Shaare Zedeck Hospital in Jerusalem, Beth Avraham Orphanage in Petah Tikvah in Israel and the Lubavitch Bikur Cholim in New York City, among many others. She recently made a new major gift to the Torah Chesed Fund to provide the basics to needy YU students.

Jean Herschaft may be reached at 76 Exeter, Brooklyn, NY 11235.

Swiss bankers clobbered in new book, 'Nazi Gold'

NEW YORK — Switzerland's attempt to in some way deflect the criticism against her for cooperating with the Nazis in a number of ways, not only in confiscating Jewish assets placed in her banks has suffered a blow with publication by Harper Collins of "Nazi Gold" by Tom Bower.

Reviewed in the New York Times Book Review Sunday by David E. Sanger, the volume demolishes the Swiss government's evasions and draws "eerie parallels between the postwar era and the present in both 1946 and 1996" and "finds a potent mixture of base motives and bad actors. There are greedy Swiss bankers who stonewall investigators to protect a huge windfall of abandoned gold, art and real estate. And there are Nazi sympathizers who, in a reminder that Frederick Forsyth's 'Odessa File' was rooted in reality, seem bent on helping Hitler's survivors tuck plenty away in case the Third Reich ever has a chance to rise again."

JEWES BY CHOICE

Mixing politics, religion

By MARY HOFMANN

I've never much worried about the old adage never to discuss politics or religion with your friends. As long as I'm conscious of the indi-



vidual sensitivities involved, I find I can discuss either in a spirit of goodwill.

The problem doesn't come with discussing politics OR religion. The problem comes with discussing politics AND religion. Or with discussing the politics OF religion. Therein lie the fireworks.

A person's religion is, really, a reflection of his or her most basic and cherished life views. I find it's always good to know the fundamentals of what's going on in another person's head when I converse with them. I don't need to change people, but I do want to understand them.

Politics, however, implies the use of power to effect change. When we're dealing with politics AND religion, somebody's usually trying to use power to change another person's most basic and cherished life views. The results are usually ugly, not only because of the physical and psychological damage that can ensue, but because people are able to rationalize often despicable behavior as righteous.

I think about this sad state of affairs whenever I read about religious zealots of any flavor who try to force their beliefs on the rest of us either by direct coercion, physical threat, or societal sabotage. We converts, of course, get it from both ends.

When I think of direct coercion, I think of door-to-door missionaries and television evangelists who flat out declare that anyone who doesn't follow The Way (i.e., Their Way) is doomed. A similar, more subtle variation, is the ultraorthodox Jewish establishment who, rather than using scare tactics, simply shun the rest of us as not authentic. It's more subtle in its cultural aspect, I suppose, and in some

ways an interesting and ironic convolution of the old Gentleman's Agreement. The bulk of converts to Judaism, of course, thus become traitors to their earlier religion and *persona non grata* to the diehard Orthodox. All we can hope is that eventually reason will prevail, which makes us cockeyed optimists.

When I think of physical threat, I think of crosses burning on lawns, of swastikas painted on shuls, and of rocks being thrown at cars on shabbat.

While the practitioners of physical politics may exist on a slightly lower rung on the evolutionary scale than those

prayer politics, abortion politics, and Israeli politics. In all of them, religion is used as the righteous shield behind which political weapons are wielded. Most advocates of school prayer say they aren't using prayer as a wedge to convert or denigrate the rest of us, but I don't believe them. Most right-to-lifers may believe they have a right to legislate everyone else's rights, but I think it's about control. The religious right in Israel makes no bones about it. It IS about control. If the show-down in Israel leads to political breakdown, anti-Semites the world over will celebrate. But those religious zealots

When I think of societal sabotage, I think of school prayer politics, abortion politics, and Israeli politics. In all of them, religion is used as the righteous shield behind which political weapons are wielded. Most advocates of school prayer say they aren't using prayer as a wedge to convert or denigrate the rest of us, but I don't believe them. Most right-to-lifers may believe they have a right to legislate everyone else's rights, but I think it's about control. The religious right in Israel makes no bones about it. It IS about control.

who use verbal means of persuasion, their strategies do win them press coverage. Most converts, tending to be liberal and educated (we have to be to learn all we have to learn), are again in the crosshairs of whatever nastiness is being indulged.

When I think of societal sabotage, I think of school

sure will have shown us uppity liberal converts a thing or two, won't they?

On that note, I think I'll sit down with my granddaughter and read a book about Judaism. I'd like her to learn about what it should be, not about what it so often is when politics gets involved.

Jewish Mrs. USA is a possibility

CHARLESTON, S.C. — There has been one Jewish Miss America and now there could be a Mrs. United States as Wendy Goer, Charleston's 1997 federation campaign chairman, was crowned Mrs. South Carolina. She will compete for the title in Las Vegas at the end of the month.

There was no pageant for

the contest, the decision having been made by a panel of judges. She was required to write an essay about her favorite women in history and chose Queen Esther.

But at Las Vegas there will be the *sina qua non* — a bathing suit contest and an evening gown competition.

WHAT I HAVE TO SAY

Jewish identity here and in Israel

By ARLENE PECK

Funny how time flies away from you. I suppose, if one's not careful, your whole life can go like that. I spent over a year in Israel and in a blink of



an eye, it passed. Now that I'm back in Los Angeles, it's amazing how different and easy it has been to slide into the previous life. What are the differences? How do I feel about my Jewishness in California, compared to the daily life in Tel Aviv?

I've been thinking lately about how my "Jewish identity" is defined. What is the difference in each place to be Jewish? The question in the California lifestyle is if those with Jewish backgrounds should even make the effort to persist as a separate and identifiable Jewish minority. According to Alan Dershowitz, in his book, "The Vanishing American Jew," the Jews in America are facing their biggest crisis ever. He says the Jews of America will likely disappear as an identifiable ethnic group by the year 2076. Which, incidentally, coincides with the 300th anniversary of the American Declaration of Independence. The main reasons he cites are the decline of anti-Semitism in the United States and the widespread acceptance of Jews in public life. We, as a group have prospered in America in all fields as we have never before in history. So, while we have lulled ourselves into a feeling of well-being and security, our secularization and rate of intermarriage has grown.

Dershowitz says secular Jews have the lowest birthrate of any religious or ethnic group in the United States. (1.5 to 1.6 percent below the 2.19 percent necessary for replacement.) If present trends continue, the only identifiable group of Jews who have a soaring birthrate (6.4 percent) and are intolerant of secular values are the ultra-orthodox.

Interesting, that Dershowitz writes about the

demise of the religion of Judaism and its culture. A culture, which he says is 3,500 years old and will disappear along with the creative, intellectual, scientific, artistic and entrepreneurial talents that the Jews of the world have contributed to civilization.

He certainly knows firsthand as his son James married an Irish Catholic girl who, I have no doubts, is raising his grandchildren with as little Jewish heritage as possible. It's a little late for him to worry about his son's loss of Jewish identity after raising him with "humanistic values."

His calls for the "New Jew-

thing positive and not to be avoided.

Not so in Israel. Jewish nationalism and the ideology of Zionism are bound together to give an uninterrupted identity to the Jewish people. Yet, there is confusion, I believe even today in what we in America know as the separation of Church and State. Israel was formed as a Jewish State and yet, today, because of the rapid power of the ultra haredi, there are mixed feelings of whether Israel should be a State of Jews or a mixed cultural country with Jewish inhabitants. Theodor Herzl envisioned the Jewish statehood to be one of secularism

knows what it is and is usually involved in its observation. Not so in the life of American Jews.

Somehow we have forgotten that Judaism is the very heart of our Jewish culture. While they are searching for a "new identity" I fear for the loss of a core of Jewish identity. The amazing fact of our "old identity" is, to me, something wondrous to behold. When you stop to consider that even though we did not have, until the birth of Israel, a common territorial base, it is amazing that we have still been able to hold intact our culture, religion and ethnic purity.

No wonder there is always confusion in the politics of the country. The Zionist ideology and the nationalism of a state are tied irrevocably together. We worry about the vanishing Jew. I feel apprehension that my children will forget the values with which they were raised. I'd prefer to think that would not happen; and for the moment the future looks bright. In fact, one of my daughters will soon be marrying an Israeli and living in Tel Aviv. I fret about the assimilation that is so prevalent in the United States. However, it upsets me just as much when I see how our energies are being spent in diversion.

Gertel

Continued from page 5
interlude of reverence, despite all the side plots, including Fran's mother sticking the butler, an invited guest, with all the cooking and serving (of cheesecake, too!). But the writer undermines his own reverent moment by having Sylvia add a "fifth question" about when Sheffield will marry the nanny (*beshert* all over again?) and then having the nanny dash out to seek her "messiah" (or Elijah?). Barbra Streisand, even though Fran has succeeded in attracting her young wards to the

Fleishman

Continued from page 7
planes will continue to be among the best and its service to the various airports in America from one end of the country to the other are used

I find the constant arguing between the Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform movements appalling. Somewhere down the line the leaders of these various factions of our faith have forgotten that we share the same values and when we try and weaken those who don't believe exactly as we do, everyone suffers. The bottom line is not how often we attend synagogue but, whether we want to continue our birthright identity.

While in Israel, I began to feel a personal disdain for the vocal squabbles between the various branches of the Jews in the Orthodox and non-Orthodox branches of Judaism. I hate it that we have forgotten that we, as a people have a religion that has been based on varied lifestyles. Our interpretations are open for discussion and then reinterpreted. Not so, in Jerusalem any longer. There, I see a wave of rigid, closed-minded haredi who have built a fence around their minds. That folks, is dangerous. Because, once we have lost the desire to adapt and respond to changing social conditions, we are in serious trouble. It should never be "them" against "us" when were relating to fellow Jews. I don't want "us" to be "our" enemy!

warmth and ritual of the seder table. If there had just been silence at the end of the seder scene, this could have been one of the most touching presentations of Judaism on TV, despite the troubling undercurrent of a seder more for Gentiles than for Jews. Well-chosen one-liners before the seder and the silence might have even been the most effective one-liners ever in the series. Maybe old jokes, while not sacred scripture, can convey something sacred if combined with effective moments of silence.

extensively. They are an important part of Israel and should be so regarded.

Alfred Fleishman may be reached at PO Box 410108, St. Louis MO 63141.

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ish state of mind" and a secularized Judaism may be popular among American Jews, most of whom, I believe, have come to identify their Jewish State as being a member of an exclusive cultural group instead of a member of religion. I wonder, where does the concept of G-d come in?

One of the things I've noticed by living in both the United States and Israel is how so-called "Jewish identity" varies in both places. In America, the liberal beliefs in the Bible and Torah are crowded into the pluralistic contributions of the previous and latter day cultures such as the Buddhist, Egyptian, Chinese and many other lasting civilizations. We have become a nation of skeptics and humanists who, I believe, look upon assimilation as some-

and not religious. Thus the conflict which has continued until today.

Until the arrival of the Russians, many of them not of Jewish religious origin, the country of Israel was one of strong Jewish nationalism and Zionist ideology. It is, for the most part, still so today. Each new wave of residents was usually fleeing anti-Semitism. What I've noticed during my residency in Israel was that even the ones who call themselves secular and "not really religious" in Israel are far more observant than what I experience in the United States.

When the sabbath comes in Israel, everything stops and the time is spent with family and communal living. When there is a Jewish holiday, no matter how minor, everyone

Luria

Continued from page 10
night air with strange scenes and creatures. He told of goldsmiths driven by evil spirits to create monsters, of holy men who walked seven miles at a single step. Tired after the day's turmoil, the women huddled around him in a tight circle. I watched the old man's beard bobbing in the dim light until he seemed one of the fearful spirits in his stories. Sometimes I saw goblins grinning at me in the dark beyond the porch. As a story teller Yankel hit a home run every time he came to bat.

And so it went. Shana won the day; Yankel evened the score at night. When the women quarreled, he played deaf and went for a nap in the hayloft. "I don't mix in. If they let me alone, I let them be," he said. In return, Shana never

listened to his stories. She sat churning butter out of earshot and scolded, "Word spinner! Maybe you have time for idle chatter. I don't."

Neither of them was going to win the kokhaleyn championship without a spectacular, sweeping victory. It would have to be as tremendous as Babe Ruth's 60th home run in a single season.

The big event came at last, one morning right before Labor Day. The women came crowding around Yankel with their order slips for groceries which he was to fetch in his buggy from the village. But this wasn't Ivan's day. For some secret reason he wasn't telling anyone, Ivan just didn't feel like being a horse. Yankel tried to harness him, but Ivan remained plopped down on his knees. Neither

the whip nor a lump of sugar changed his mind. Without Ivan we were cut off from the world outside by two endless miles!

Yankel shook his head and scratched his beard. "Nu, give us a miracle. Bring the horse to life," urged Shana. This was a dig. His stories had miracles by the dozen.

Meanwhile the kokhaleyners complained loudly. "You want us to starve? Without meat I have nothing to cook. Even in prison they give you bread. At home I have a grocery downstairs. For this I had to come to the country?"

"So talk to the horse!" retorted Shana. She wrinkled her snub nose in thought, then suddenly grabbed hold of the buggy shafts as if to test her strength. Without another word Shana took a mighty hold on the shafts, and this time, never stopped until she had rolled the buggy onto the road. "Nitgedaigel! Stop worrying!" she cried. And she was on her way to the village.

Just past the kokhaleyn yard there was a rocky bump, and Shana had trouble clearing it. As if on signal, all the children poured out to help. Some of us pushed while others hung on; so how helpful could we have been? But we wrestled the buggy over the hump onto flat road at last. And uphill and down, we were off to Kerhonkson with Shana.

From store to store we scurried, loading the buggy with rye bread and meat, cans, and bushel baskets of oranges and bananas. Then we started home. Truthfully, even atrociously overladen, the buggy wasn't that hard to pull, espe-

cially with so many of us pushing from behind. But there was something grand in what Shana and we were doing, something maybe that Yankel could turn into a story which we could only half believe. So we put on a show, heaving and straining and grunting our way through the village.

Summer people and country people alike ran out to look. Car drivers stopped and honked. Shana was breathing heavily and sweat was running down her face — to her it was no kid stuff — but when onlookers began to clap their hands, we straightened up and strutted like conquering

heroes.

Back at the kokhaleyn at last, we found Yankel sitting gloomily on a log. Ivan had disappeared. When we found him, he was frisking in the meadow. He looked the image of healthy horse flesh.

So Shana, with a little help from us kids, had carried off the pennant. And she was a generous winner. When Yankel began spinning his yarns that evenings, she sat and listened with the rest of us for the first time that summer.

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Silver

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tated a series of frenzied sessions between Israelis and Reform and Conservative rabbis, both American and Israel. The non-Orthodox rabbis declared that if the measure survived the two additional readings and became law it would split world Jewry.

After interminable sessions, a compromise was reached. The Bibi administration said it would not ask for two more readings, and the non-Orthodox leaders said they would halt appeals to Israel's courts to permit non-Orthodox rabbis to enjoy religious prerogatives now denied to them.

Then there was the forced ouster of Minister Dan Meridor, followed by threats of defection by others of Bibi's cabinet. That was followed by Bibi's overture to Arik Sharon and the latter's insistence that he be permitted "sharin" a seat in the government's inner councils. In the meantime it was disclosed that Sharon had conducted clandestine conversations with one of Arafat's aides.

All this time Sharansky was barking at Netanyahu's heels, threatening to drop out of the coalition if some of his demands were not fulfilled. And that was not the only badgering of Bibi.

In Israel he addressed an international Zionist conference. After his talk, he was approached by the president of Hadassah, Marilyn Post. She handed him a written plea — to promote religious pluralism in Israel.

Then there occurred a fracture between the Reformers

and Conservatives in Israel. They had acted in unison against the invalidation of non-Orthodox conversions. But then something happened: An Israeli Reform rabbi officiated at the "wedding" of two women whom he bedecked with a tallis. Conservative Rabbi Ignatz Ramon exploded and called the wedding a disgrace. The officiating rabbi, Rabbi Ariel Yoel, said it wasn't a wedding; it was a "commitment ceremony." But an Israeli legislator, Moshe Gefni, cried out that whatever it might be termed, it proved that Reformers are out to destroy Judaism. Back in the United States, the United Jewish Appeal bowed to the demands of the Orthodox and removed the term, "religious pluralism" from their printed materials. Tempestuousness abounds.

Cohen leaves JNF post

After 20 years as exec of the Jewish National Fund, Dr. Samuel Cohen announced his retirement. In a salute to him, the JNF president, Ronald Lauder (one-time ambassador to Austria, one-time Republican nominee for mayor of New York) paid tribute to Cohen. He pointed out that when Cohen assumed the post the JNF's revenue was \$6 million. Because of his leadership, the "take" this year was \$32 million. (Gershon Jacobson, in the *Algemeiner Journal*).

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Weintrob

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to an Orthodox world, which served religious ritual that was food for the soul." The traditions and observances were intriguing. The mikveh was described by one group member as "beautiful and pristine." Many readers in this group admitted that they would like to live a life like this. One told me privately that it was nice to meet a Jew who wasn't ashamed of being Jewish.

The view of Classic Reform was that traditional Judaism was a narrow and limited way of life. Former UAHC President, Rabbi Alexander Schindler, called liberal Judaism's past approaches "a form of [Jewish] minimalism."

Exasperated that many Jews are turning to a way of life that

liberal Judaism rejected, too many Reform Jews dispute with their more traditional brethren over which is the more authentic Judaism. It is time to see that the Reform Jews of an earlier generation, hungry for acceptance, went shopping and bought assimilation. It is time to see that liberal Judaism needs to restock the traditions that have always been integral to Judaism — this is what will satisfy those who search for spiritual nourishment. Rabbi Sheldon Zimmerman, president of Hebrew Union College, the Reform Seminary, recently stated: "Our task is to reform Jews, not Judaism." Zimmerman has thrown down a gauntlet — will Reform Jews pick it up?

MYSTERY PERSON

Do you know who's who?

• The Mystery Person was a guest hostess on The Tonight Show.

All Mystery Persons are limited to North American Jews. Winners of the Mystery Person contest will receive a two-month subscription, the equivalent of \$8 if not a subscriber, or, if a subscriber, a two-month extension of their subscription. Once appearing in the contest, that same individual will not be repeated as a Mystery Person. All correct answers are considered winners, not only the first received.